SPECIAL AND CHOSEN SERMONS OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, COLLECTED OVT OF HIS writings and preachings for the necessary instruction and edification of such, as hunger and seeke after the perfect knowledge and inestimable glorie which is in Christ Iesu, to the comfort and saluation of their soules.

Englished by VV. G.

Philip. 3. 8. 9.

I thinke all thinges but losse for the excellencie of the knowledge of Christ Iesus my Lord, for whom I haue counted all thinges losse, and doe iudge them but vile, that I may winne Christ, and be found in him, not hauing myne owne righteousnes, which is of the lawe, but that which is through the faith of Christ, euen the righteousnes which is of God through faith.



Imprinted at London by Thomas Voutroullier dwelling in the Blacke Friers by Ludgate.

CVM PRIVILEGIO.

1581.

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TO

TO THE RIGHT VVORSHIPFVLL SYR THOMAS HENNEAGE KNIGHT, TREASVRER OF HER Maiesties priuie chamber, W. GACE wisheth peace and saluation in Christ.

CONsydering (right vvorshipfull) that saying of Dauid alleaged by the Apostle Paul, that there is none that vnderstandeth, none that seeketh after God, that all are gone out of the vvay, and become vnprofitable: me thinkes it doth liuely set forth the blindnesse of mans vnderstanding, the vvickednesse of his vvill, and his peruersnes and vnhabilitie vnto that vvhich is good. VVhereof if vve had not many testimonies of Scripture, yet common experience vvere able to confirme the same, vvhen vve daily see men so carefull to liue, and so carelesse to liue vvell. Hovvbeit this is no meruell: for as a tree vvhose roote is rotten and infected vvith venimous sappe, bringeth forth none but corrupt and naughtie frute: so from mans hart vvich is corrupt and infected vvith the venim of sinne, can proceede nothing that is good.

Novv mans vnderstanding being blinde, he is not able of himselfe to attaine to the knovvledge of God, and consequently vvithout some other meanes or helpe can not be saued: for this, as our Sauiour in the Gospell sayth, is life euerlasting, to knovv one onely true God, and him vvhom he hath sent Iesus Christ. Againe, mans vvill being corrupt, he is not

able to ſerue God as his dutie requireth, as to honnour him as his Lord, to obey him as his father, to truſt in him as his Protector and preſeruer, to be thankefull to him for his infinite benefites, &c. VVherefore leſte man being ignorant of God should be excluded from ſaluation, or leſt through the vvickednes of his vvill and inclination to euill, he should dishonour ſo high a Lord, diſobey ſo good a father, diſtruſt ſo carefull a preſeruer, and be vnthankefull to ſo gratious a giuer, vvho doth not ſee hovv requiſite and needefull it is, that he should by good inſtructions be brought to the knovvledge of the Lorde God, and by godly exhortations and admonitions be reclaimed from his vvicked vvayes to the performance of his dutie? Novv foraſmuch as God hath in his vvord reuealed ſo much of him ſelfe as is expedient for man to knovv, & hath therein alſo preſcribed that maner of ſeruing him vvhereof he accepteth, man muſt out of it learne the true knovvledge and right ſeruice of God, and therefore moſt neceſſary it is that this vvord be preached & taught, that thereby man may learne to knovv God, and truly to vvorship & ſerue him being knovvne. So ſhall his minde be enlightened vvith diuine knovvledge, and his vvill reformed according to Gods vvil, ſo ſhall this vvord be a lanterne vnto his feete, and a light vnto his paths, vvhereby he may be directed in all his vvayes. But (alas) this is a thing to be lamented, that the harueſt is great, but the labourers are fevv. For among them vvhich ſupply the places of labourers in the Lordes harueſt, ſome there be vvho doe vvith diligence diſcharge their dutie, many moe there are, vvho albeit they be able, yet doe eyther quite neglect it, or very ſclederly execute it, but greateſt is the number of them, vvho for lacke of ſkill & knovvledge are not able at all to performe it. VVherefore there is great neede to pray the Lord of the haruſt, that he vvill ſend forth labourers into his harueſt, vvhereby many moe then do, may receiue the Goſpell of Chriſt Ieſus euen to the ſaluation of

their

their ſoules.

The premiſes vvell vveyed, I thinke (right VVorſhipfull) there may a ſufficient reaſon be gathered, vvhy I did purpoſe the publiſhing of theſe Sermons of D. Martin Luther in our vulgar tongue, and vvhy at the laſt I haue by ſome labour and paynes brought the ſayd purpoſed publiſhing to paſſe. I vvas in deede at the firſt procured thereunto by a learned Father of this lande, vvhoſe vvordes and iudgement I make no ſmall account of, but aftervvard entring into deeper conſideration of the matter, and vveying on the one ſide the great ignorance of many euen in matters of ſaluation, togither vvith the daily diſhonouring of God by vngodly life and on the other ſide the diuine doctrine and moſt vvholſom exhortations vvhich theſe Sermons conteine, I vvas more forcibly ſtirred vp thereunto, and thought that the painefull peruſing of them, and frutefull follovving of that vvhereof they entreat, vvold be a ſoueraigne ſalue to helpe to cure ſuch daungerous diſeaſes. For by them may they learne to knovv one onely true God, and vvhom he hath ſent Ieſus Chriſt, and the infinit riches vvhich are compriſed in him, and offered vnto vs through him of God his Father: that he humbled him ſelfe to exalt vs, that he became a ſeruaunt to ſet vs at libertie, that he vvas empouerished to make vs rich, that he dyed for our ſinnes, & roſe againe for our iuſtification, that through his meanes mercie hath ſvvallovved vp miſerie, and bounty hath ouercome all euill, finally that vvithout him there is no ioy nor conſolation, no peace nor quietnes, no felicitie nor ſaluation, but that he is the onely meanes by vvhich all good thinges are attained: ſo that they vvhich enioy him receiue not one gift alone, as vvith Salomon vviſedom, vvith Samſon ſtrenth, vvith Iob patience, vvith Paule zeale, &c. but for pouertie they receiue riches, for vveaknes ſtrength, for folly vviſedom, for ſeruitude fredom, for griefe ioy, for ſinne righteouſnes, for death life, yea all good thinges vvhat-

ſoeuer.

VVherefore if the faithfull man be preſſed vvith pouertie, he may here learne that by Chriſt he is adopted to be the Sonne of God, and ſo may be comforted, ſaying to him ſelfe: Hovv can he be poore vvhich hath God to his Father? vvho both is able to giue all thinges neceſſary, for his is the earth and all that therein is, and alſo vvill giue the ſame becauſe he is moſt louing and gracious to his children. Againe, if he feele in him ſelfe vveakenes, he may learne here that he is not able of him ſelfe to attaine vnto ſtrength, but that it is the gift of Chriſt, vvho ſtrengthneth ſuch as beleeue in him, & ſo may be ſtirred vp by hartie prayer to aske the ſame of him, that he vvill vouchſafe by his holy ſpirit to ſtrengthen and confirme him that he may be able to performe that by grace, vvhich by nature and of him ſelfe he ſhall neuer be able to doe: as mightely to ſubdue the rebellious flesh, ſtrongly to reſiſt, and at the laſt valiantly to ouercome the tentations of Satan, patiently to beare the troubles of the vvorld, and conſtantly to contemne the alurements of the ſame. Moreouer, if he thirſt after diuine and heauenly vviſedom, (vvhich is to knovv God aright, and thoſe thinges that are neceſſary to be knovvne to the attaining of ſaluation) he may finde here largely and liuely ſet forth, that Chriſt came his Fathers Embaſſadour and Meſſenger to men, that by him they might be brought to the right knovvledge of God, and into all truth, ſo that by him vve are enlightened vvith the knovvledge of God, by him vve are inſtructed in all truth, and conſequently by him vve obtaine diuine and heauenly vviſedom. Here alſo ſhall he learne that Chriſt vvas made vnder the lavve, that he might redeeme them vvhich vvere in bondage vnder the lavve, & of ſeruile bondmen make them free ſonnes, euen the children of God.

Furthermore, if griefe and heauines come vpon him, he is here taught vvhere true ioy may be had euen in Chriſt

Ieſus

Ieſus alone, that in him onely he may finde ſure comfort, ſouereigne medicines, preſent remedie, true ioy of hart and quietnes of conſcience. Finally, vvhereas vve are ſinnefull, and haue by our ſinnes iuſtly deſerued Gods eternall vvrath and moſt heauie vengeance, he ſhall here learne that Chriſt hath payed the ranſome for our ſinnes, and pacified Gods moſt grieuous vvrath and diſpleaſure iuſtly conceiued againſt vs. And becauſe it is not ſufficient that due ſatisfaction be made for ſinnes, and Gods vvrath appeaſed, but vve muſt alſo appeare righteous before God, it is here shevved, that as by one mans diſobedience many vvere made ſinners, ſo by the obedience of one, namely of Ieſus Chriſt, as many as beleeue in him ſhalbe made righteous, inaſmuch as his righteouſnes is imputed to them as their ovvne, vvhereby they appeare perfectly righteous before God, and are accepted of him: ſo that vvhereas they had of themſelues deſerued eternall death, they are through Chriſt accounted vvorthie of euerlaſting life. But vvhat do I go about to rehearſe the infinite treaſures vvhich the faithfull enioy through Chriſt? it ſhall be ſufficient to conclude vvith the Apoſtle Paule, and ſay: If God ſpared not his ovvne Sonne, but gaue him for vs all to death, hovv ſhall he not vvith him giue vs all thinges alſo?

Novv foraſmuch as theſe thinges, and the right meanes to attaine vnto them, are in theſe Sermons of that moſt learned Diuine Martin Luther moſt learnedly, yea euen diuinely ſet forth, they may vndoutedly be a ſingular meane, not onely to inſtruct them vvhich be ignorant in matters of ſaluation, but alſo to increaſe and confirme the knovvledge of ſuch, as haue alreadie vvell profited in Chriſtian religion. Hovvbeit there is annexed hereunto ſound and abſolute doctrine concerning good vvorkes and godly conuerſation, as being moſt neceſſary to be of all Chriſtias perfectly knovvne, and effectually followved. For Chriſtians through Chriſt being become the Sonnes of God, hovv vnmeete, yea hovv

abhominable a thing is it that they should reſemble Satan in their doinges? being nowv made the members of Chriſt, howv deteſtable a thing is it that they should be inſtruments of iniquitie? being nowv the temple of the holy Ghoſt, howv beaſtly a thing vvere it to defyle the ſame vvith the filthines of ſynne? Finally hauing receiued ſo many and ſo great benefites of God through Chriſt, howv vvicked and shamefull a thing should it be, to be vnthankefull to ſo gratious a God, to be diſobedient to ſo louing a Father, in any vviſe to diſpleaſe ſo mercifull a Sauiour? But it shalbe needeleſſe much to ſtand vpon this point, ſeeing it is not vnknowvne to the faithfull vvith howv great endeuour they ought to auoyde that vvhich is euill, and embrace that vvhich is good, and therefore shall ſincere and perfect doctrine concerning good vvorkes be vnto them no leſſe commodius and profitable, then needefull and neceſſarie.

For the cauſes aboue ſpecified eſpecially among other, I haue (right VVorshipfull) though not finely, yet faithfully tranſlated theſe Sermons into our vulgar tongue, and haue done myne endeuour for the publishing of the ſame, vvhich I doe humbly dedicate to your VVorships protection, by your zealous godlines, and godly zeale chiefely moued thereunto, vvhereby I am induced to thinke that you vvill vvell accept of them. For as the godly doe vvith Dauid delight in the Arke of the Couenant, in the Tabernacle of the Lord, in the holy Mount Sion, that is, in the Church of God: ſo do they vvith the ſame Dauid deſire the building of this houſe of God, the florishing of this vine, the peace and proſperitie of this heauenly Heruſalem, and therefore that vvhich is a meane and furtherance hereunto, they do not onely loue and like, but alſo highly eſteeme, and hartily pray for. VVherefore (right VVorshipfull) I thinke it altogither ſuperfluous to go about vvith vvordes, to procure your vvell liking and accepting of theſe Sermons, foraſmuch as they tende onely to

this

this ende, that the Church of God may by them be edified, as in the premisses is of me declared. VVhereas in translating them I haue vsed a plaine kinde of stile (yet such as sufficiently expresseth the meaning of the author) and not studied for curious vvordes & eloquent phrases, the cause thereof is, for that I preferre plainnesse vvith profit, before much curiositie vvith smaller commoditie, so that I nothing at all feare that in this respect they shalbe misliked of the Godly, vvhose misliking onely I endeuour to auoide.

Thus (as it seemes vnto me) hauing intreated sufficiently of those thinges vvhich I thought pertinent to my present purpose, I do here conclude, desiring the Lord God, that he vvill by his holy spirit alvvayes gouerne and direct you in the true obedience of his blessed vvorde, to the glorie of his diuine Name, to the profit of your neighbours, and comfort of your conscience, so shall you assuredly haue prosperous successe in all your affayres, and at the last obtaine euerlasting ioyes and endlesse felicitie, by the onely meanes of Christ Iesus our Sauiour.

Your Worships humbly at commaundement W. GACE.

AN ADMONITION TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

FOR the commendation of this worke, and the Author thereof, there ſhall not neede I truſt at this preſent, any great diſcourſe to be made, foraſmuch as ſo many good bookes of the ſame writer be alreadie ſet abroade, whereby may ſufficiently be coniectured what is to be thought of this alſo. Againe becauſe the worke it ſelfe is ſuch, conteining ſuch matter of heauenly conſolation, that without any further commendation of other, it yeeldeth cauſe ſufficient to commende it ſelfe. Onely this then remaineth, to intreate and exhort the reader, but to peruſe & reade the ſame, who in ſo doing ſhall finde I doubt not, neither to lacke great cauſe in vs to ſet forth theſe Sermons, nor leſſe neceſſitie in the readers to beſtow paines in peruſing and reading them, for the dignitie of the matter, and ſingular fruite therein to be found. For what more worthie matter can be, then to ſet forth Chriſt in his right glorie, in his full riches and royall eſtate to the hartes and ſoules of men, eſpecially ſuch as are heauie, laden, and diſtreſſed in ſpirite? what more comfortable hearing, or doctrine more true, then of forgiuenes and remiſſion of ſynnes, ſo graciouſly purchaſed, ſo freely offered by our Sauiour, ſo cleerely preached by his miniſters? or what riches more excellent, then faith fixed in Chriſt, and hope ſtabliſhed in the promiſes of lyfe? or what ſtudie more frutefull, then to ſeeke the kingdome of God? For

where the frute of all other ſtudies decayeth and hath his ende, the frute of this ſtudy abydeth for euer. And therefore not without cauſe we be ſo willed by our Sauiour him ſelfe, firſt to ſeeke for this kingdome and righteouſnes thereof, promiſing withall in an other place, that he which ſeeketh ſhall finde. In the ſeeking of which kingdome two ſpecial notes we haue to learne and ſearch, firſt the glorie & grace of the King, ſecondly the wealth and felicitie of the Subiectes. In which two partes as the whole ſumme of all our ſpirituall comfort moſt principally conſiſteth, grounded in the holy Scriptures: ſo of al expoſitors of the ſame Scriptures, I know none or fewe, in theſe our dayes, more liuely to open theſe comfortes vnto vs out of Gods worde, then this Doctor and Preacher of theſe Sermons here following: which as he hath done moſt effectually firſt in his owne tounge to his country people, then in Latin to the learned: ſo this tranſlator hath no leſſe plainly and faithfully engliſhed the ſame for the commoditie and vſe of our contry folke of England. By whoſe meanes and induſtrie this vantage we haue now gayned, that we haue gotten vnto vs one good Preacher in England more then we had before, to the comfort and edification of all ſuch as be diſpoſed to read and learne. So that in ſuch townes and villages, wherein before were mute Miniſters, κατὰ πρόσωπα, this Preacher now may ſupplie the lacke, and there be receiued as their Parſon, if they pleaſe, preaching now in their owne ſpeech vnto them, and putting them to no charges of any tythes. And in other places where more plentie of learned teachers is, yet notwithſtanding no hurt ſhall come to admit this ſtranger as a coadiutor, or felowhelper vnto them. VVhereby I nothing dout, but in ſo doing, all ſuch as ſhalbe willing to giue eare to this Preacher, as well they

that

that be learned, ſhall fynde wherein to growe in more perfection, as alſo the vnlearned wherein to be inſtructed ſufficiently to their ſoules health in Chriſt Ieſu. In whom I wiſh to thee and to all true Chriſtian readers all ſpirituall grace and heauenly wiſedome, to bleſſe thy ſtudies, to proſper thy labours, to ſtablyſh thy faith, to multiplie thy conſolations, to direct thy wayes, and finally, to glorifie thee both body and ſoule in his bleſſed kingdome for euer. Amen.

I. FOX.



in good parte, and giue thankes to God, howesoeuer he dealeth with them, or suffereth them to be dealt with, they may not murmure, but resigne and committe them selues wholy to the will of God, yea (forasmuch as they know that God doth dispose and gouerne all thinges, whom they are sure, that they haue a mercifull and most fauorable father vnto them through Christ) they may euen reioice and be glad in persecutions, according to that saying of Paule in the Epistle to the Romanes: We reioyce in afflictions and persecutions. For inasmuch as they haue a ioyfull conscience and a sure trust of the fauour of God, they can not but count all thinges for the best, whatsoeuer happen.

Christians must beare persecution and trouble patiently.

Behold what kinde of good will it is in all thinges, whether they be prosperous or vnprosperous, which the Angells doe here with vnto men, and sing to be proper to the beleuers. Where such good will is wanting, there peace can not be long. Men take all thinges in the worse part, they take nothing in good part, but doe alwaies increase and double the euill. Hereupon howsoeuer God dealeth with them, they like it not, but require that they may be dealt otherwise with, and so it falleth out as it is in Psal. 18. with the pure thou shalt be pure, and with the froward thou shalt be froward, that is, with him that counteth all thinges pure to him selfe, and hath that good will in all thinges, whereof we haue spoken, thou also doest well agree, inasmuch as he pleaseth thee and all good men. But he that is froward, so that neither thou, nor those thinges that are thine doe like him, can not but displease both thee and all good men. Of this well pleasing one an other Paule speaketh 1. Cor. 10. Endeuour to please all men, euen as I please all. By what meanes shall this be done? If thou take all thinges in good part, and suffer others to please thee, thou also againe shalt please others. The matter may be comprehended in one word: If thou wilt be liked of none, nothing shall be liked of thee: If thou wilt be liked of all, suffer that all thinges may be also liked of thee, but so, that thou doe not neglect the word of the Lord. For that ought to be preferred before all, without any regard had of all mē, what pleaseth them, or what displeaseth them. But whatsoeuer may be done without transgressing the word of God, giue place to all, & submit thy iudgement to the iudgement of others, that thou mayest take euery thing in good part, which shall chaunce vnto thee, & so thou shalt haue the good will, where-

Where good will is not, there peace can not continue.

How farre we may please men and submit our selues vnto them.

of the Angells did sing.

By this song it may be vnderstoode, what nature the Angells haue. I omit those thinges which the Philosophers haue dreamed hereof: here is so described what the Angells are, that it can not be more fullie done, their heart and cogitations being declared. First with great ioy they sing prayses to God, acknowledging all thinges to be due vnto him, and therefore doe with an ardent minde, and singing glorifie him. As therefore thou wouldest thinke of a right lowly, pure, & obedient hart, praysing God, and alwayes enioying perpetuall gladnes in him, so thinke also of the Angells: & thou hast now the nature of Angells, as much as they haue to doe with God. The second thing to be considered in them is their loue towardes vs. Thinke that they are most louing toward vs, which desire that it may goe as wel with vs as with thē selues, they doe no lesse reioyce for our safety then for their owne, and euen in this hymne full of loue to vsward, they declare them selues so affected toward vs, that surely, we may thinke and reioyce of them, as of most louing frends. This is to know the Angells truely, not according to their essence, whereof the Philosophers doe foolishly & without frute babble many thinges, but according to their hart and minde, so that albeit I know not, what their nature is in it selfe, yet I knowe what is their chiefe desire, and their continuall worke. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning the songe of the Angells, & the frute of the natiuity of the child Iesus Christ. God graunt vs his grace, that we may print these things in our heart, and according vnto them also amend our life.

Amen.

The first thing to be considered in the Angells.

The seconde thing which we ought to marke in the Angells.

A

A SERMON OF D. MARTINE LVTHER, OF THE EPIPHANIE OR APPEARING OF CHRIST.

Matth. 2.

Verse. 1. WHen Ieſus then was borne at Bethlehem in Iudea, in the dayes of Herode the King, behold there came wiſe mē from the Eaſt to Ieruſalem,

2. Saying, where is that king of the Iewes that is borne? for we haue ſeene his ſtarre in the Eaſt, and are come to worſhip him.

3. When King Herode heard this, he was troubled, and all Ieruſalem with him:

4. And gathering together all the chiefe Prieſtes and Scribes of the people, he asked of them, where Chriſt ſhould be borne.

5. And they ſayd vnto him, at Bethlehem in Iudea: for ſo it is written by the Prophet,

6. And thou Bethlehem in the lande of Iuda, art not the leaſt amonge the Princes of Iuda: For out of thee ſhall come the gouernour, that ſhal feede that my people Iſraell.

7. Then Herode priuily called the wiſe men, and diligently inquired of them the tyme of the ſtarre that appeared.

8. And ſent them to Bethlehem, ſaying: Goe and ſearch diligently for the child, & when ye haue found him, bring me worde againe, that I may

come also and worship him.

9. So when they had heard the King, they departed: and loe, the starre which they had seene in the East, went before them, till it came & stood ouer the place, where the child was.

10. And when they sawe the starre, they reioyced with an exceeding great ioy.

11. And went into the house, and found the childe with Marie his mother, and fel downe, & worshipped him, and opened their treasures and presented vnto him giftes, euen gold, and frankincense, and myrrhe.

WE celebrate this day a noble, and most comfortable feast, concerning the appearing of the Lord Iesus, who appeared a speciall comfort to all them which seeke him with a strong faith: first to the wise men which came from the East: secondly to Iohn the Baptist, when being about thirty yeares of age he was baptised of him in *Iordan*, and the holy Ghost and voyce of the father gaue testimonie of him, that he is the sonne of God: thirdly, when he shewed his glory and power in a miracle, wherein he turned water into wine at a mariage, whereby he would procure reuerence & estimation to matrimony, which now (Alas) is after a shamefull sort torne, contemned, and reiected of the Pope and his adherents as a certaine miserable and wretched state. For whatsoeuer God hath ordained, that of the world is contemned: whereof at conuenient time we will speake more, and we haue already as I thinke written sufficient thereof. Now we will speake in few wordes of the first appearance.

The wise men of *Arabia*, which were industrious men, and without all doubt gouernours of that countrey (as it was at that time the maner in those partes) when they had seene the starre in the East, breaking of all delay, made haste to Ierusalem, diligently seeking for the King of the Iewes beeing newe borne. Where we ought to marke, that they could neyther seeke nor finde

Matth. 5. If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leaue there thine offering before the altar, and goe thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift. Here ye doe most plainly both heare and see, that God will not be serued, vnles we first goe to our neighbour, and be reconciled to him. For the same cause also God reiecteth the sacrifices of the Iewes, as it is in the prophesie of Esay chapter 1. for that they did neglect those thinges which were more necessary, namely mercy and faith: for thus he sayth: Why offer ye so many sacrifices vnto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of weathers, and of the fatte of fedde beastes, I haue no pleasure in the blood of bullocks, lambs, and goates. When ye come to appeare before me treading in my Courtes, who hath required this at your handes? Offer me no moe oblations, for it is but lost labour: incense is an abhominable thing vnto me. I may not away with your new Moones, your sabbathes, and solemne metings, your solemne assemblies are wicked. I hate your newe Moones and appointed feastes euen from my very hart, they make me weary, I can not abide them. VVhen ye hold out your handes, I will turne myne eyes from you: and though ye make many prayers, yet I will heare nothing at all, seeing your handes are full of blood. VVash you, make you cleane, put away your euill thoughts out of my sight, cease from doing of euill. Learne to doe well, apply your selues to equitie, deliuer the oppressed, helpe the fatherles to his right, defend the widow, and so forth as is there rehearsed of Esay. By these wordes of Esay ye see what God requireth, & what he alloweth. When we neglect those works, by which our neighbour is serued, he againe will neglect vs. For whatsoeuer benefit we bestow vpon our neighbour, that we bestow vpon God and Christ him selfe, as he shall pronounce in the last iudgement: VVhatsoeuer ye haue done to one of the least of these my brethren, ye haue done it vnto me. *Mat.* 25.40.

God doth not accept the seruice which we offer him, if we neglect charitie toward our neighbour.

When thou hearest this, thou wilt not glory much, of the temples which thou hast builded, or masses which thou hast founded. For then he will say: what haue I to doe with thy temples and Masses? what with thyne altar and bells: thinkest thou that I am delighted with stones, and wood, with bells and banners? Are not all thinges myne first? Heauen is my seate, and the earth is

God will accept, not the works which we haue inuented, but which he him selfe hath commaunded.

my footestoole. Who commaunded thee to build temples? I haue set liuing temples before thee, these are to be edified, nourished, & relieued, but thou hast bene occupied with other trifles, which I haue not commaunded. I know thee not, away with thy temples and masses: ye ought to haue put your trust in me onely, but all your delight consisted in such workes, as though it had bene your purpose by so doing to wreak heauen from me, & that I may comprehend all in a briefe summe: whatsoeuer I haue commaunded, that hath bene of you neglected: and whatsoeuer I haue detested and abhorred, that ye haue diligently done: this therefore I will requite you with againe, I know you not, ye may resort vnto that God which hath commaunded you to doe these thinges.

Here therfore let vs learne, how the wise men did nothing abhorre the poore & on euery side miserable appearance of this infant and his parents, that we also may be so affected toward the miserable and pitifull estate of our neighbours, & may be perswaded that we doe find Christ in them, & that whatsoeuer is bestowed vpon them, Christ doth acknowledge it as bestowed vpon him selfe. His kingdom consisteth in the poore, despised & abiects, yea in the holy crosse, in contempt, in persecution, in affliction & miserie, as Paule sayth out of the Psalme: for thy sake we are killed all the day long, and are counted as sheepe appointed to be slayne. In an other place also he sayth: we are made as the filth of the world, the offcouring of all thinges. Wherefore Christ sayd to his disciples, when he sent them forth to preach in Iudea: Behold I send you forth as sheepe in the middes of the wolues. They now that seeke Christ any other where then in such a contemptible forme, in ỹ crosse, & in persecution, do not find him. The wise mẽ did find ỹ king Christ being newly borne, not in Herods court, not among the Princes & priests, not at Hierusalem, in so noble and famous a citie, but at Bethlehem in a stable, with poore and despised creatures, namely Ioseph and Marie. In a summe, Christ will there be foũd, where a man would least seeke for him.

The kingdõ of Christ wherein it consisteth.
Psal 44.20.
2 *Cor*.4.11.
1.*Cor*.4.14.

Matth.10.15.

But we must diligently consider also, what these wise men signified by their giftes. For assuredly they shewed by them, that this child is a king, and not a king onely, but also God, and man. In offering gold they acknowledged him for a king, as if they would say: We bring vnto thee gold, not that we would thereby enrich thee. For gold, siluer, and whatsoeuer is made is thine be-

What the wise men signified by their offring of gold.

fore,

ſore, but hereby we acknowledge thee to be a moſt mighty king ouer all things. So we alſo offer gold vnto Chriſt, when we acknowledge him for our king and Lord: but vnto this is required a very ſtronge faith. For if I ought to acknowledge him for my king and Lord, all myne owne will muſt be extinguiſhed, that it reigne nothing at all in me: for Chriſt onely muſt reigne & rule in me, that he may doe whatſoeuer it pleaſeth him in me, and concerning me, all things muſt be committed vnto him. So the leaper in Matthew did, which ſayd vnto Chriſt: Lord, if thou wilt thou canſt make me cleane. Therefore my will muſt be vtterly extinguiſhed in me, if that I will haue Chriſt to reigne in me. Chriſt alſo ſuffered not his owne will to rule, but he alwayes ſubmitted him ſelfe to the will of his father, which he teſtifieth in the ſixt chapter of the Goſpell by S. Iohn: I came downe from heauen, not to doe myne owne will, but his will which hath ſent me. Yea he obeyed his father euen vnto death, and ſubmitted him ſelfe wholy to his will. We imitating this example, which is written for our ſingular conſolation, ought to ſubmit our will to God and his Chriſt, and to reſt confidently vpon him. He knoweth how to bring the matter notably well to paſſe, as it is ſayd *Pſal. 37.* Commit thy way vnto God, and put thy truſt in him, and he ſhall bringe it to paſſe. And a litle after: Hold thee ſtill in God, and ſuffer him to worke with thee. Such ſentences ought to prouoke vs, patiently to ſuffer the will of God in vs, whether ſweete thinges or ſowre, commodities or diſcommodities come vnto vs: for he knoweth with what temperature to lay them vpon vs. Bleſſed is he that beleeueth theſe thinges from his hart. Who being ſuch a one, can be troubled with ſorow? Such a man howſoeuer he be handled, whether he be burned or drowned, caſt into priſon, or otherwiſe grieuouſly delt with, he taketh all in good part. For he knoweth that theſe thinges ſhall turne to his commoditie. After this ſort doe we alſo offer gold with the wiſe men, when we take away rule from our owne will, and doe ſuffer Chriſt to worke in vs according to his will and pleaſure. Wherfore they are hypocrites, which knowe not to ſuffer the will of God, but howſoeuer he dealeth with them, haue alwayes, whereof they doe complayne. They forſooth ſuppoſe, that whatſoeuer they thinke, it ſhall haue ſucceſſe according to their thinking. If it fall out otherwiſe, they are angry, they doe not patiently ſuffer

How & whē we offer gold vnto Chriſt.

perſecution and contempt: they murmure, they finde fault, and vexe when thoſe thinges happen, no otherwiſe then horſes being ſtirred vp with furie or rage. So therefore by reſiſting they ſtay the kingdom of Chriſt from them, and deprive Chriſt of gold, which notwithſtanding they ought to offer and preſent vnto him, that is, they themſelues will beare rule, and doe not vouchſafe to acknowledge Chriſt for their king and Lord.

Frankincenſe what it ſignified, & when we offer the ſame vnto Chriſt.

By frankincenſe they reſembled diuine honour, which we then offer vnto him, when we confeſſe, that whatſoeuer we haue, we muſt acknowledge it to haue come from God, and that we haue it freely, and without any merit of ours: Wherefore all theſe thinges are to be aſcribed vnto him, as to the true Lord, neither muſt we glory one whit in the good things receiued, but his glory is to be ſought in them. And if he take them from vs againe, we ought to ſuffer him with quiet mindes, and to bleſſe him with the beloued Iob in theſe wordes: Naked came I out of my mothers vvombe, and naked ſhall I returne thither againe: the Lord gaue, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord. And ſo we ought to ſuffer al misfortunes and aduerſities, as if God him ſelfe did caſt them vpon our neeke, ſo that none ſhall be able to offend vs, vnles he take away Chriſt from vs. Not ſo much as a heare of our heades ſhall periſh, as Chriſt ſayth to his Diſciples Luke 21. Wherefore whatſoeuer ſhall moleſt vs, what aduerſitie ſoeuer ſhall come vnto vs, we ought neuer to ſeeke any other God, we ought no where to ſeeke any other helpe and comfort, then of Chriſt alone. This is he which is made vnto vs of God the father, wiſedom, righteouſnes, ſanctification and redemption. Then onely we offer vnto Chriſt that right frankincenſe of *Arabia*, when we flie vnto him alone in our calamities, afflictions, and anguiſhes. But they that ſeeke after ſtraunge helpes and comfortes, as of Sorcerers, Witches, and ſuch like, they do not offer frankincenſe vnto Chriſt, but ſtinking brimſtone, wherein they ſhall be burned for euer, for that they haue not beleued and truſted in Chriſt.

Iob. 1. 21.

Myrrhe what it ſignified.

By myrrhe they ſignified a mortall man: for with myrrhe dead bodies were anoynted, that for certaine yeares they ſhould not putrifie. Nowe myrrhe is a ſtronge and bitter iuice, which diſtilleth from the trees of *Arabia*, like vnto gumme, or as with vs roſen iſſueth out of the pine tree, the firre tree, &c. But then

we

cording to his mercy he saued vs, by the washing of the newe birth, and the renuing of the holy Ghost, which he shed on vs aboundantly, through Iesus Christ our Sauiour, that we being iustified by his grace, should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life.

The second thing to be considered in the baptisme of Christ.

Secondly the holy Ghost appeareth here in the likenes of a doue, when Christ is baptised, whereby is signified that we also doe receiue the holy Ghost in our baptisme, which ruleth & guideth vs according to the will of God, which is present with vs, & helpeth vs in bearing the burden of the holy crosse, which erboreth vs, is instant vpon vs, enforceth vs, and when we yeld to the burden of the crosse, is present and helpeth vs: if we fall, raiseth vs vp againe, and is with vs as a certaine faithfull companion in our iorney. He also maketh the burden of the crosse light, which we were very vnable to beare, if he did not put to his helpe. If so be that thou fall into sinne, remember to goe backe vnto thy Baptisme, for this is the onely ship, wherein we passe ouer. Wherefore take heede of them which make two tables, wherby we passe ouer the sea of sinnes, namely baptisme and repentance. Beleue them not, whatsoeuer they handle, it is meere delusion: baptisme is the beginning of repentance. As often therefore as thou fallest into sinne, haue recourse vnto thy baptisme, there thou shalt againe obtaine the holy Ghost, who may be present with thee. For repentance is nothing else, but a displeasing of him selfe, a detesting of his wicked life, and a renuing of the man, which is represented in baptisme. After such a renuing of the life, followeth the praise of God, and thankes giuing vnto him for the grace receiued, then such a man bursteth forth, and behaueth him selfe friendly toward his neighbour, and doth good to him in al things. This is signified by that, that the holy Ghost appeared vpon Christ in the likenes of a doue: for a doue wanteth the gall. Such they also become, which receiue the holy Ghost in baptisme, to wit, they are gentle and without all bitternes toward all.

The third thing to be considered in the baptisme of Christ.

Thirdly, the voyce of the father is heard in the baptisme of Christ, which sayth: This is my beloued Sonne, in whom I am well pleased. This is that Sauiour, which deliuereth vs from the tyrannie of sinne, death, Satan, and hell. And here we must learne, how we must come vnto God. He that desireth to be the gracious & deare child of God the father, must attaine vnto this

through Christ, through him alone the beloued sonne, who sitteth in the bosom of his father: vnto whom alone the father looketh, without whom he alloweth nothing, and whatsoeuer pleaseth the father, it pleaseth him in respect of this his sonne. Wherefore he that desireth to goe to ỹ father, must cleaue to this beloued sonne, must lay him selfe vpon his backe. For by this voice all titles albeit they seeme very goodly and holy, are taken away, nothing is of value or estimation with the father but onely this his beloued sonne, he is in his especiall fauour. Now he that desireth to be in fauour with the father, and to be beloued of him, let him flie into the bosom of the sonne, by whom afterward he findeth accesse to the father, as Paule sayth *Ephe. 1.* that through Christ we are adopted, without this Christ we are the enemies of God. Whosoeuer therefore cleaueth to Christ through faith, he abideth in the fauour of God, he also shall be made beloued and acceptable, as Christ is, and shall haue fellowship with the father and the sonne. But where this is not done, there is nothing but wrath, there no honestie, no vertue, no free will, neither prayer, nor fasting, nor other workes shall profit, thou shalt but trifle with all these. For this is a most mighty, and most excellent voice: This is my beloued sonne, in whom all thinges consist and are comprehended, which are extant in the whole Scripture. Euen as all things are deliuered into the handes of Christ, and gathered into one, that they may obey him, as S. Paule sayth. For when God sayth: This is my beloued sonne, by shewing Christ onely, and shewing and naming no other, he maketh it plaine enough, that none is his beloued sonne beside him. If so be that other are not beloued sonnes, it is certaine that they are the children of wrath and indignation. For if there were moe beloued sonnes, he would not so set forth and shew this sonne alone, saying: This is my beloued sonne, neither would turne his eyes vnto him onely, and glory of him alone, as though he knew no other. For the wordes seeme to shew, that he did diligently looke about, and yet found none, beside him, of whom he sayth: this is he, as if he sayd: Here at the last I haue found such a one as pleaseth me, and is my beloued sonne, all other generally are not such.

Moreouer, these words are not so onely to be vnderstood, that it is shewed by them that Christ is very God, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes sayth: Vnto which of the Angells sayd he at any

time,

time, Thou art my Sonne, this day begat I thee? and againe, I will be his father, and he ſhall be my ſonne, &c. For it is moſt certaine that Chriſt in theſe wordes is declared to be the true and naturall ſonne of God, ſeeing that this word was neuer ſayd to any creature. Howbeit he had bene as well the ſonne of God, and had ſo remayned for euer, as he hath bene from euerlaſting, although this had not bene ſpoken vnto vs from heauen, neither is any thinge added or taken away from him by this name, but we muſt thus thinke & perſwade our ſelues, that ſo excellent a praiſe, and ſo noble honour of Chriſt was ſpoken for our cauſe. For he him ſelfe witneſſeth in Iohn, that this came not becauſe of him ſelfe, but for our ſakes. He hath no neede that it ſhould be ſayd vnto him, that he is the ſonne of God. He knew this before, & hath from euerlaſting & by his nature, that which he beareth. Wherefore when that is conceaued by voyce and word, it pertayneth to vs, and not vnto Chriſt. Chriſt without the word, is ſuch as he is ſaid to be. We haue the word without him, of whom it is ſpoken. Wherefore we muſt lay faſt hold vpon the word without the eſſence, euen as he hath the eſſence without the word. *Iohn.12.30.*

But what doth this word? it teacheth vs to knowe Chriſt, in which knowledge our ſaluation conſiſteth, as Eſay, Paule, and Peter doe witnes. But how doth it teach vs to know him? ſo, that he is the ſonne of God, and doth eſpecially pleaſe God his father, by which wordes God cheereth the hartes of all the faithfull, and greatly delighteth them with mere comfort, and heauenly ſweetenes. Howe is this done? When I knowe, and am ſure, that this man Chriſt is the ſonne of God, and doth in all things pleaſe the father, whereof I muſt be moſt fully perſwaded: foraſmuch as the diuine maieſtie doth confirme this by his voyce from heauen, which can not lye, whereby I am certayne, that whatſoeuer that man doth ſpeake and worke, they are the meere words & workes of the beloued ſonne, which are aboue meaſure approued of God. This therefore I doe ſingularly well marke, and lay vppe in the bottome of my heart. When as therefore I doe hereafter heare Chriſt ſpeake, or ſee him doe any thing, and that for my commoditie, which ſurelie he euerie where doth, (for he ſayeth, that he doth and ſuffereth all thinges for vs, that he came to ſerue and not that he ſhoulde be ſerued,) then I remember theſe wordes of the father, that he is the beloued ſonne, then I am enforced to

thinke, that all that Christ speaketh, doth and suffereth, and that for my sake, doth singularly well please God.

Nowe howe can God poure out him selfe more liberallie, or shewe him selfe more lovingly and sweetely, then by saying, that it doth please him from ẏ heart, that Christ his sonne doth speake so gently with me, doth with so greate affection looke vnto my commoditie, and with such vnusuall loue suffer, dye, and do whatsoeuer for my sake. Doest thou dout, that if mans hart did with due sense feele such fauour of God in Christ, to wit that he doth so much for our sakes, it would not for ioy burst into most smal peeces? for then it woulde looke into the depth of the diuine breast, yea and into the exceeding and eternal goodnes and loue of God, which he beareth toward vs, and hath borne toward vs from euerlasting. But we are too hard harted and cold, the flesh doth lye more heauie vppon vs, then that we are able to comprehend such wordes, we doe not well consider of them with our selues, neither doth our heart come neare to feele how maruelous and vnspeakeable loue and ioy they contayne in them, otherwise without dout we shoulde perceaue, that heauen and earth are full of the fire of the diuine loue, of life and righteousnes, full of honour and praise, whereunto the fire of hel, whereunto sinne, & death being compared, are nothing but as it were a thing painted or pictured. But we are colde, sluggish, & vnthankefull wretches, for we passe ouer such precious wordes, as things of no importance, & as vttered of man, as being contayned in a booke, or writtē in paper, as things vtterly decaied, and now long since growne out of vse by long custom, as though they pertayne onely to Christ, and to vs nothing at all: And being dull and senseleste, we doe not see that they belong nothing to Christ, but were committed to writing and are extant onely for our sake.

Seeing therefore that Christ the beloued sonne, being in so great fauour with God in all thinges that he doth, is thine, and doth in the same, serue thee, as he him selfe witnesseth, without dout thou art in the same fauour and loue of God that Christ him selfe is in. And againe, the fauour and loue of God are insinuated to thee as deepely, as to Christ, that now God together with his beloued sonne, doth wholy possesse thee, and thou hast him againe wholy, that so God, Christ, and thou doe become as one certaine thing. Hereunto make many sentences of the Gospell, but especi-

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ally in Iohn, as this: If any man loue me, my father will loue him, and we will come vnto him, and will dwell with him. Also: Where I am, there shall also my seruaunt be. Againe: I pray that they may be one in vs as thou and I are one, I in thee, and thou in me, and they in me. *Ioh.14.23.* *Ioh 12.26.* *Ioh.17.* But where is Christ? In the fauour of God, in the depth of his hart, there also are we, if so be that we knowe and loue Christ, there I thinke we are sure enough, there our refuge is placed high enough, whether no euill can come, as it is in the 91. Psalme.

But thou seest that faith is required hereunto, and that vnto these things no law, no worke, no merit doth preuaile. Hereupon it commeth to passe, that so precious wordes are so abstruse and vnknowen to reason. For it hath bene gouerned of Satan from the creation of ẏ world, when as in Paradise it would be as God, & presumed after honour, which God here attributeth to Christ alone, forasmuch as he is his sonne, wherunto it is yet also prone and inclined, and setteth it selfe against these words, & the wordes againe are against it. For because Christ is here declared the only sonne of God, it is mightely ouerthrowne, whatsoeuer maketh it selfe god. But who be they that make them selues god? surely Satan and man, which please them selues, and loue them selues, they seeke not after God, but striue to attaine vnto this, that they also may become gods. But what will God say vnto these: Truly a certayne contrarie thinge to that which he sayd vnto Christ: Christ is my beloued sonne, in whom I am well pleased, seeing that he glorifieth not him selfe, and maketh not him selfe God, although he be God. But ye are wretches, in whome I allowe nothing, seeing that ye glorifie your selues, and make your selues gods, albeit ye be creatures and men, and not God. So this sentence giuen of Christ doth humble ẏ whole world, doth shew them to be all voyde of diuinitie, and ascribeth it to Christ, and that all for our commoditie, if we will, and do admit this sentence: or to our condemnation, if we will not, and do contemne this sentence, so that I may say at once: without Christ there is no fauour, nor any beloued sonne, but very wrath and sore displeasure of God.

Certaine ſentences out of the Scripture concerning Chriſt, vvhereby is declared that through him vve are loued of the Father, and vvithout him are refuſed.

*Ioh.*1.16.17.

Of his fulnes,(to wit Chriſtes) haue all we receaued, and grace for grace. For the lawe was giuen by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Ieſus Chriſt.

*Ioh.*3.13.

No man aſcendeth vppe to heauen, but he that hath deſcended from heauen, euen the Sonne of man which is in heauen.

*Ioh.*3.16.17.18.

God ſo loued the world, that he hath giuen his only begottē ſonne, that whoſoeuer beleueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life. For God ſent not his ſonne into the world, that he ſhould condemne the world, but that the world through him might be ſaued. He that beleueth in him, is not condemned, but he that beleeueth not, is condemned alreadie, becauſe he hath not beleued in the name of that onely begotten Sonne of God.

*Ioh.*3.35.36.

The Father loueth the Sonne, and hath giuen all thinges into his hande. He that beleeueth in the Sonne, hath euerlaſting life, & he that obeyeth not the Sonne, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

*Ioh.*6.40.

This is the will of him that ſent me, that euerie man which ſeeth the Sonne, & beleueth in him, ſhould haue euerlaſting life, and I will raiſe him vp at the laſt day.

*Ioh.*7.37.38.

Now in the laſt great day of the feaſt, Ieſus ſtoode & cried, ſaying: If any man thirſt, let him come vnto me, and

and drinke. He that beleueth in me, as sayth the Scripture, out of his belly shall flow riuers of water of life.

Tit. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

But when that bountifulnes & that loue of God our Sauiour toward man appeared, not by the workes of righteousnes, which we had done, but according to his mercy he saued vs, by the washing of the new birth, and the renuing of the holy Ghost, which he shed on vs aboundantly, through Iesus Christ our Sauiour, that we being iustified by his grace, should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life. Many other such sentences there be, especially out of the Epistles of Paule, which euery one may gather by him selfe.

A SERMON OF D. MARTINE LVTHER, OF THE GENEALOGIE OR PEDEGREE OF CHRIST.

Matth. 1.

Verse. 1. THis is the booke of the generation of Iesus Christ the sonne of Dauid, the sonne of Abraham.

2. Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Iacob, Iacob begat Iudas and his brethren.

3. Iudas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar, Phares begat Esrom, Esrom begat Aram.

4. Aram begat Aminadab, Aminadab begat Naasson, Naasson begat Salmon.

5. Salmon begat Booz of Rachab, Booz begat Obed of Ruth, Obed begat Ieſſe.
6. Ieſſe begat Dauid the king, Dauid the king begat Salomon of her that was the wife of Vrias.
7. Salomon begat Roboam, Roboam begat Abia, Abia begat Aſa.
8. Aſa begat Ioſaphat, Ioſaphat begat Ioram, Ioram begat Hozias.
9. Hozias begat Ioatham, Ioatham begat Achaz, Achaz begat Ezekias.
10. Ezekias begat Manaſſes, Manaſſes begat Amõ, Amon begat Ioſias.
11. Ioſias begat Iechonias and his brethren, about the time they were caried away to Babylon.
12. And after they were brought to Babylon, Iechonias begat Salathiel, Salathiel begat Zorobabel.
13. Zorobabel begat Abiud, Abiud begat Eliacim, Eliacim begat Azor.
14. Azor begat Sadoc, Sadoc begat Achim, Achim, begat Eliud.
15. Eliud begat Eleazar, Eleazar begat Matthan, Matthan begat Iacob.
16. Iacob begat Ioſeph the husband of Marie, of whom was borne Ieſus that is called Chriſt.

The ſumme of this text.

1. *Matthew beginneth his booke with a title or inſcription, by which the beleuer is prouoked with greater pleaſure to heare and reade it. For he ſayth thus much in effect: Whom the Law and Prophets haue hetherto promiſed & preached, Ieſus, that is, a Sauiour and Chriſt, that is an eternall king, that he according to the promiſe of God, ſhould ſpringe and come of the ſeede of Abraham and Dauid, euen him doe I deſcribe in this booke, to*

wit

wit, that he is now borne, and made man, and alreadie come into the world. This I handle through this whole booke.

2 Three lines or degrees are here rehearsed. In the first is contained the stocke of the fathers, in the second of the kings, in the third is contained the decaying stocke of Dauid: after the decay whereof it behoued that Christ should come. For so the goodnes of God is wont to doe, when all thinges seeme euen past hope and recouerie, then at the last he commeth.

3 Matthew omitteth one in his rehearsall, but that maketh no matter, seeing that he obserueth this one thing, that he counteth by the right line from Dauid by Salomon to Ioseph the husband of Marie. Luke counteth otherwise, and vseth another order.

The exposition of the text.

When Adam our first father hauing fallen by a notable offence, was guilty of death with al his children, as well in body as in soule, it was notwithstanding promised vnto him, although obscurely, that both he and his posteritie shoulde be deliuered, in those wordes which God spake to the Serpent: I will put enimitie betwene thee and the woman, betwene thy seede and her seede, and it shall tread downe thy head. *Gen. 3. 15.* Of these wordes Adam tooke comfort that a woman should come, by whose frute such guile and sutteltie of the Serpent should be againe amended, and Adam redeemed. This comfort did vphold Adam with his posterity vntil Noe. For then the promise was renued, when God made a couenant with the sonnes of Noe, and set the rainebow for a signe of the couenant, whereby men might conceaue a trust & confidence, that God is yet fauourable vnto them, and doth not purpose their destruction: whereby mankinde was againe vpheld and comforted euen vntill Abraham.

In the time of Abraham God did somewhat shewe forth his mercie, he declared that he would send a Sauiour, who should deliuer vs againe from death both of bodie and soule: for albeit the bodie should dye, yet it should not alwayes remaine in death, but rise againe with the Lord Christ: The wordes which God spake to Abraham Gen. 22. are thus: In thy seede shall all the nations

of the earth be blessed. Here miserable men had a cause to hope and looke for a Sauiour which should deliuer them. From that time all the Prophetes did diuersly foretell of this aboue measure flowing fountaine of all mercie, that is, of this seede, of the Lord Christ, how that he at the last should come, that all which beleued in him, might obtaine saluation by that promise which can not be reuoked. If so be that men would now open their eyes, they must needes confesse and say, that a straunge and incredible thinge is done with vs, that man being in the state of damnation, cursed, & desperate, should be restored by the natiuitie of one man. Hereupon the Prophetes cried out with ardent prayers and vnspeakeable groning, that God woulde vouchsafe to sende the Sauiour whom he had promised. By faith in this Sauiour the Israelites afterward obtayned the lawe, and this honour before all people, that they were called the elect people of God. By which ordinances written of Moses the anointed was plainly figured and signified, whome this text which we haue nowe in hande setteth forth, what he is, from whence he is, and by the afore sayd faith all obtayned saluation from Abraham vnto Dauid, euen as many as were saued.

In the time of Dauid God made the comming of the Messias to be more manifestly declared, that it might be certainly knowne of what stocke he should come: namely, of the stocke of Dauid, as when God sayed vnto Dauid: When thy dayes be fulfilled, thou shalt sleepe with thy fathers, and I will set vp thy seede after thee, which shall proceede out of thy body, and will stablish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for euer. I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne. And yet more plainely in the Psalme: The Lorde hath made a faithfull othe vnto Dauid, and he shall not shrinke from it: Of the frute of thy bodie shall I set vppon thy seat. Here Christ is described, that he shall be a king, and an eternall king, as it is mentioned of him in an other Psalme: Thy throne, O Lord endureth for euer, the scepter of righteousnes is the scepter of thy kingdome. Howebeit he is a spirituall king, which ruleth the worlde by his worde: and whosoeuer receaueth his worde, pertaineth to his kingdome. But he that is not vnder this scepter, neither heareth his worde, is not of God, neither pertaineth to his kingdom, but is subiect to the kingdom of Satan,

2. Sam. 7. 12.

Psal. 132. 11.

Psal. 45. 6.

Who pertaineth to the kingdom of Christ, and who to the kingdom of Satan.

tan, vnder whose tyrannie we all are, vntill the Lord doth deliuer vs from it, & defend vs with his scepter, which is then done when we beleeue in him. Forasmuch therefore as our saluation doth come merely by the promise of God, let euery one assuredly perswade him selfe that he shal neuer obtaine saluation without this promise: although he should doe the workes of all Saincts, yet they should profit him nothing hereunto. Contrariwise, if we lay hold on the scepter of this king, that is, of the promise of God, we shal not perish, although the sinnes of the whole world should lye vpon vs, they shall be all swallowed vp in him, albeit no good worke be done of vs. As we see in the theefe, which hong by the Lord on the crosse, who layd hold on the word of God, and beleeued in Christ, and therefore he obtained the promised Paradise. Here is no doubt left, let vs onely beleeue that it is so, and it is so in deede, all things which men teach, or which we haue done or can doe, being set aside. Here all things must giue place, at the comming of this new king, that he alone may rule and reigne in vs. Let a man intermeddle with those things that are written of this king, as being his owne matters, and as pertaining all vnto him. For whatsoeuer is written any where of Christ, it is written for our comfort, that we may thereby feede and cherish our faith. To the establishing of such faith God hath mercifully left vnto vs his promise written, & hath suffered to be published, that he will performe that which he hath promised. Whosoeuer apprehendeth this in his heart, it must needes be that with sighing he thirst for such Scripture & promise of God, who of his grace being not prouoked of vs, offereth vnto vs and bestoweth vpon vs such goodnes and mercy.

Whatsoeuer is written of Christ, it is written for our comfort.

But let vs now come to our present text, which not with words only, but also with a certaine force pearseth the hart, and poureth into it loue, pleasure, ioy, gladnes, &c. As if an Angel should now come from heauen, and say vnto vs miserable and condemned wretches, after this sort: Behold O man, thou hast sinned, wherfore thou hast deserued to be condemned for euer. (This being heard the hart must needes tremble.) Now although all this be true, yet neuertheles God of his grace hath mercy vpon thee, and sendeth to thee a Sauiour, as he promised to Abraham and his seede. Be of a good cheere, and giue thankes to God. Loe, here is the booke of the generation of Iesus Christ, who is the sonne of

Dauid, the ſonne of Abraham, ſo that this is not onely done, but alſo written, that thou mayſt be certaine thereof: Neither wil he, neither can he deceiue: beleue onely, & thou ſhalt haue al things. Now it is to be noted that Matthew ſetteth Dauid before Abraham, although the promiſe was firſt made to Abraham, and came afterward to Dauid, which promiſe made to Dauid, the prophets did afterward publiſh more abroad, and did by it comfort the people. As in the 11. chapter of Eſai, where the Prophet ſayth thus: There ſhall come a rodde forth of the ſtocke of Ieſſe, & a graffe ſhall growe out of his roote. Ieremie likewiſe ſayth thus chap. 23. Behold the time commeth, ſayth the Lord, that I will rayſe vp the righteous braunch of Dauid, which King ſhall beare rule, and he ſhall proſper with wiſedom, and ſhall ſet vp equitie and righteouſnes againe in the earth. And many other ſuch prophecies there are to be found in the writings of the Prophets, which they foretold of Dauid, that his kingdom ſhould be rayſed vp, as the Angell alſo declared vnto Marie, when he ſayd: The Lord God ſhall giue vnto him the throne of his father Dauid, and he ſhall reigne ouer the houſe of Iacob for euer, and of his kingdom ſhall be none ende. Wherefore Matthew thought good here to ſet Dauid firſt as the better knowne, and next vnto him, Abraham, vnto whom the promiſe was firſt made, as Marie in her ſong ſayth: He remembring his mercy hath holpen his ſeruaunt Iſraell, as he promiſed to our fathers, Abraham and his ſeede for euer. And that promiſe is now performed, and in this our text deſcribed, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. S. Matthew maketh a triple difference of fathers, of whom Chriſt came, fourtene Patriarkes, foureteene Kings, and foureteene Princes. For it behoued that the ſcepter and kingdom ſhould be taken from Iuda, according to the prophecie of Iacob, which is thus: The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Iuda, and a lawgiuer from betwene his feete, vntill Silo come: and vnto him ſhall the gathering of the people be. Here all thinges muſt be fulfilled: and there are thriſe foureteene generations, euen as Matthew rehearſeth them: from Abraham to Dauid foureteene generations, from Dauid til they were caried away into Babylon likewiſe foureteene generations. Howbeit there is a perſon omitted in Matthew, that is Iakim, & it ought thus to be written: Ioſias begat Iakim, & Iakim begat Iechonias and his brethren, this the Chronicles witnes. And af-

Luke 1.32.

Why Matthew ſetteth Dauid before Abraham.

Luke 1.54.

Gen. 49.10.

ter

ter they were caried away into Babylon vntill Christ, foureteene generations. Which triple distinction hath a great mysterie as we shall see.

The Iewes amonge other lawes were commaunded to obserue these three precepts, namely, to worship that God whom their fathers had worshipped. Secondly to choose no Priest of any other stocke then of their owne, that is, of the tribe of Leui. Thirdly to choose no king but of their owne people. These three precepts did very well agree in our Lord Christ, to wit, that he is that one God, that he is an eternall Priest, of our flesh and blood, and a King, our brother, who hath taken our nature vpon him: Who by his diuine power is able to helpe and saue vs, and being an eternal Priest, continually maketh intercession for vs. He is a king also, that he may defend & preserue vs, who is not to be feared of vs, seing that he is a mā as we are, yea & was made a most cōtemptible man, that our hart might be wholy quieted & appeased in him our Sauiour, who can neuer forsake vs. Who were able to stand in the sight of God, & not be terrified, if that priest did not stād before God? Who should defēd vs, if he were not a king? Who should saue vs, if he were not God? How should he haue care of vs, if he were not a man, and our brother? with whom we may speake as well as we may one with an other amonge our selues. O most gracious Sauiour, how wisely hast thou done all things? I know that thou art my brother, as it is in the Psalme: I wil declare thy name vnto my brethren, as it is alleaged in the Epistle to the *Hebr.* Albeit thou art God, my Lord Christ, and king of heauen and earth, yet I can not be afraid of thee: for thou art my friend and brother. This is no hinderance vnto me, that I am a sinner, and thou holy. For if I had not bene a sinner, there had bene no neede that thou shouldest suffer punishment for me. I see also in thy genealogie that both good and euill are rehearsed, of whose posteritie thou wouldest come, that thou mightest comfort timorous and weake consciences, that they should confidently and cherefully put their trust in thee, which hast taken away our sinnes. And that we might be certaine hereof, thou hast left vnto vs thy word, which assuredly declareth it vnto vs. *Psal.* 22. 23.

Why both good and euill are rehearsed in the genealogy of Christ.

Among the kings & princes which Matthew rehearseth, some were exceeding euill, as we may read in the bookes of the Kings. Yet God suffereth them to be rehearsed in his genealogie, as if

they were worthy, that he should come of them. But he suffered not so much as one honest woman to be rehearsed therein. Fower women are named, which all had an euill report, and were counted lewd. As Thamar, of whom Iudas the father of her husband, begat Phares and Zara, as in the first booke of Moises it is mentioned. Rahab is called an harlot in the booke of Iosua. Ruth was a heathen woman, of whom although we reade no euill written, yet forasmuch as she was a heathen, she was despised of ỳ Iewes as a dogge, and was detested of them. Bethsabe the wife of Vrias was an adulteresse before she was maried to Dauid, and of her he begat Salomon. Which women are vndoubtedly therefore rehearsed, that we may see how God hath set forth as it were a certaine glasse vnto all sinners, wherein they may see that he would be borne of the posteritie of sinners, that the greater sinners we be, so much more certaine and greater refuge we might haue to so gracious a God, Priest, and King, who is our brother, in whom onely and in none other we are able to fulfill the lawe, & obtaine the grace of God: he came downe from heauen therefore, neither doth he require any thing of vs, but that we assuredly beleue that he is our God, Priest & King, and then all thinges shal be wel with vs. By him alone we become the sonnes of God, and heires of the heauenly kingdom, as S. Paule sayth to the Galathians: Ye are all the sonnes of God by faith in Christ Iesus. Here the hartes of all sinners may leape for ioy, that they are counted worthy of such a Sauiour. Must not he needes be regenerate, whose hart vnderstandeth and feeleth this? yea he is carried with a most ardent loue to leade a new life, for he is inspired with the grace of God, inasmuch as he layeth hold of the promise of remission of all his sinnes.

Gen.38.

Ios.2.1.

By faith in Christ we become the sonnes of God, and heires of the heauenly kingdom. *Gal.3.25.*

If we will count vpon our fingers the persons rehearsed in this text, we shall finde them to be forty and two, which were in tyme past figured by the two and forty mansion places, which the children of Israell had, before they came into the promised land, as it is written in the fourth booke of Moises. If we also will come into the promised land, which our Lord Iesus Christ hath prepared for vs by his natiuitie, we must also occupie two and forty mansion places, that is, we must ceasse from our owne purpose, & be regenerate man by man, vntill we come to Marie and Iesus, there at the last we shall finde rest vnto our soules. But this nati-

uitie

uitie is hard: for our euill & corrupt nature is verie loth to leaue her owne will and purpose. And againe the case of nature is such, that no natiuitie can be without griefe, yet one hath more griefe, tentation and affliction then an other. The theefe on the crosse leapt at one leape two and fortie degrees, and came sodainely to Christ. So did many Martyrs also, and other holie men. Notwithstanding none can goe so great a iorney with small griefe, vnlesse he be caried with a great winde, that is by the holy Ghost. We must goe fayre and softly from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Iacob, and so forth. But we must begin at Abraham, that we may be founde endued with like faith as he was, and obtaine the blessing promised vnto him, then we shall more easily and cheerefully goe from one Patriarch to an other. That is, we shal passe ouer one affliction after an other, vntill we be called out of this trauell and iorney vnto our rest. For a man must be so long exercised with afflictions, and so oft renounce his owne will, vntill at the last he be brought vnder, and his flesh by this meanes be subdued, that it may obey the spirite, and walke ioyfully in the will and obedience of God. Wherefore let no man purpose with him selfe to come vnto heauen by leading a quiet life, and following pleasure, thus Christ sayth in Luke: It is easier for a camell to goe through a needles eye, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And in the Actes of the Apostles Paule teacheth that we must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God. Againe, in Luke Abraham sayd to the riche glutton: Sonne, remember that thou in thy life time receauedst thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus paines: nowe therefore he is comforted, and thou art tormented. So it behoued Christ also to suffer & by the crosse to enter into his glorie. And S. Paule sayth: All that will liue godly in Christ Iesus, shall suffer persecution.

Why the godly must suffer afflictions in this world.

Luke 18.25.

Actes 14.22.

Luke 16.25.

2. *Timot.* 3.12.

Hereupon we may learne, that all that is poyson which is according to the lust of the flesh. Wherfore Paule sayth to ỳ Rom. If ye liue after the flesh, ye shal die, but if ye mortifie the dedes of the bodie by the spirite, ye shall liue. The spirite which is of God, is readie to suffer, but the flesh resisteth. This Iesus signified by his answer vnto Peter: when he shewed vnto his Disciples, that he must goe vnto Ierusalem, and suffer many thinges of the Iewes, and be slayne also, Peter tooke him aside, and sayd

Rom. 8.13.

The flesh striueth against the spirit.

Matth. 16.22.

vnto him: Maister, pitie thy selfe, this shall not be vnto thee. But Christ turned him backe, and sayd vnto Peter: Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou sauorest not the thinges that are of God, but the thinges that are of men. Here it is manifest that the reason of man doth flatly striue against the will of God. God will haue vs enter into glorie by the crosse and persecution, but the flesh resisteth, and is troubled in afflictions. Moreouer they that are endued with the spirit of God, doe reioyce, if they be afflicted for God his sake, as it is writte of the Apostles: They departed, as Luke sayth, from the councell, reioycing that they were coũted worthie to suffer rebuke for his name. Wherefore Iames sayth in his Epistle: My brethren, count it exceeding ioy, when ye fall into diuerse tentations, knowing that the trying of your faith bringeth forth pacience: And let pacience haue her perfect worke, that ye may be perfect and entier, lacking nothing. O how necessarie is pacience for a Christian man? that we may possesse our soules by pacience, as Christ sayth in Luke, otherwise we shall lose them. Wherefore we must enter into a new kinde of life, and if at any time calamitie commeth, we must not by and by burst forth into euill speeches, & take it vnpaciently, but we must alwayes lift vp our hart to God, and beare his will with a pacient minde, he will well deliuer vs in his time, when it seemeth good to him, and we must alwayes thinke, that he beareth a fatherly affection toward vs, euen when he sendeth persecutions, anguishes, afflictions, and aduersities, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes sayth: Ye haue forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh vnto you as vnto children: My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint whē thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loueth, he chasteneth: and he scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth. If ye endure chastening, God offereth him selfe vnto you as vnto sonnes: for what sonne is it, whome the father chasteneth not? If therefore ye be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastardes and not sonnes. God giue vs his diuine grace, that we may couragiously passe these two and forty degrees, and with the Lord Christ be regenerate into a newe life.

Amen.

Act. 5. 41.

Iam. 1. 2.

Luk. 21. 19.

God euen when he chasteneth and correcteth vs, doth loue vs, and care for vs.

Heb. 12. 5.

A

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER VPON THE HYMNE OF ZACHARIAS, COMMONLY CALLED BENEDICTVS.

Luke 1.

Verse. 68. BLeſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, becauſe he hath viſited and redeemed his people.

THat godly man Zacharias ſpeaketh here of thinges as already done, when he ſayth: he hath viſited and redeemed his people, &c. For he was certaine of them: now the child Iohn was come, being about to begin to preach of our redemption, as the Angel had foretold of him, that he ſhould goe before the Lord in the ſpirite and power of Elias, to turne the hartes of the fathers to the children, and the diſobedient to the wiſedom of the iuſt men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lorde: this promiſe he knew ſhould aſſuredly come to paſſe.

Wherin this redemption conſiſteth, I thinke it is already ſufficiently knowne vnto you, namely in this, that God viſiteth and deliuereth vs. Which viſitation and deliuerance is accompliſhed neither by ſworde nor violence, but by the worde alone wherein conſiſteth more, then in the blood and death on the croſſe.* For becauſe of the worde Chriſt ſhed his blood on the croſſe. It was the worde that Iohn preached, when he ſhewed the Lambe of God which taketh away the ſinnes of the worlde, that is, when he declared our viſitation and redemption, which Chriſt hath purchaſed with his blood. This Iohn was the firſt Meſſenger which preached the Goſpel. Wherefore to vs, to whom the Goſpel was not before preached, it is, as if Iohn him ſelfe did now preach it, for now is firſt ſet forth vnto vs redemption, ſweete conſolation, deliuerance from ſinnes, death, hell, and all euill. To viſit is no-

* That the word & promiſes of God might be accompliſhed and fulfilled.

thing elſe, then to come vnto vs, to bring and declare vnto vs the word of ſaluation, by which we are ſaued.

Zacharias conceiued ſo great ioy and pleaſure in his hart, that he could not containe him ſelfe, but he muſt needes burſt forth into thoſe wordes which in this Hymne he vttereth, not onely becauſe of the infant newly borne, although euē this brought great ioy vnto him, but alſo for that by the birth of this child he beholdeth a farre greater ioy, foraſmuch as he was a Meſſenger ſent of God to preach his word to the world. He reioyceth therefore becauſe of ſuch a word which he ſhould heare, & for that he ſhould be as it were altered from an olde man to a yonge man, & ſhould become a ſcholer of an infant now lying in the cradle, whom he confeſſeth to be a Prophet better learned then him ſelfe. Manifeſt natural ioy is here, for that that infant was borne after a meruelous ſort. Moreouer here is ioy of the ſpirite, inaſmuch as that infant ſhould become a Preacher of the word of God. And I am of that mind that I think that there was neuer any father, which conceiued ſo great ioy of his child, as this Zacharias did of his ſonne being ſo meruelouſly borne by the power of God, and for that eſpecially in the time of olde age, when he was now neare vnto death, he is made a father of ſo great a Sainct, which ſhould be a maiſter and teacher of the world. It is a delight and pleaſure vnto vs, if we beget a child that is ſound, fayre, and wel proportioned in body, that I may ſay nothing, what ioy it would bring, if our child ſhould be an Apoſtle & Preacher of the word of God to the world. Whatſoeuer ignominie therefore & contempt he did ſuffer before when he was barren together with his wife Eliſabet, he is now moſt abundantly recompenſed with plentiful honour and ioy, ſo great bleſſings doth God beſtow, if we patiently abide his leyſure. For if he at any time come, he commeth very rich and plentifull in giftes, and doth giue much more then we euer either wiſhed or hoped for.

Zacharias conceiued both natural and ſpiritual ioy at the birth of his ſonne Iohn.

Verſe. 69. And hath rayſed vp the horne of ſaluation vnto vs, in the houſe of his ſeruaunt Dauid.

These wordes are not ſpoken of Iohn, for that he is not an horne rayſed vp in the houſe of Dauid, for he was borne of the tribe of Leui: but Chriſt our Lord is of the houſe, and of the royall ſtocke and blood of Dauid. Wherefore Zacharias doth not ſinge

singe here, in the house of Leui, but that in the house of Dauid an horne is raised and lifted vp: and when Christ was not yet borne, he neuertheless singeth so, as if he were borne, neither was the horne of saluation yet come, notwithstanding he knew by the reuelatiõ of the holy Ghost, that it should shortly come. An horne among the Hebrewes signifieth power, confidence, dominion, and that whatsoeuer, wherein any man may trust, &c. As we reade in Daniel cha. 7. where the Prophet first seeth kingdoms, then beholdeth beasts, some hauing one horne, some two hornes. And he afterward interpreting him selfe, expounded them for kingdoms and Kinges: and this is a phrase and maner of speaking peculiar to this language. Nowe Zacharias signifieth that Christ is our head, yea our God, whose kingdom is his horne.

An horne what it signifieth among the Hebrewes.

He addeth: the horne of saluation, or blessednes. Some kingdoms are famous in name and power, other are large, abounding with plentie of great treasures, much people, honours, and all temporall thinges: But this is called a kingdome of saluation, grace, life, righteousnes, truth, and of euerie thing that pertayneth to saluation, whereby it differeth from all other kingdoms. For albeit they be large, riche or mightie, yet are they counted the kingdoms of death, for they that gouerne them must at the last fall, dye, perish, and leaue their power and riches behinde them. Neyther was there euer any worldelie kingdome which might be called a kingdom of life, wherein is life, peace, and saluation, for onely the kingdome of Christ doth glorie and triumphe in this title, inasmuch as God hath raysed it vppe, that there may be nothing in it but saluation and felicitie. Moreouer I finde nothing here spoken of manners and trades of life, or of workes: For this kingdome consisteth neyther in outward life nor workes, but in the horne, in Christ, and his Gospell. This kingdom is ours, whereof ye haue heard, that it is a kingdom of grace, life, righteousnes, saluation and mercie, so that whosoeuer is in it, although he be inferiour to Iohn in holines, and farre vnlike Christ in perfection, yet he liueth in a kingdome wherein is nothing but saluation and blessednes, whereof also it hath and reserueth the name.

What difference there is betwene other kingdoms & the kingdom of saluation which God hath raysed vp.

It is sayd moreouer that this kingdom is raysed vp in ẏ house of Dauid: but by what meanes was it raysed vp? euen by the holy Ghost, and by his worde. He sayth, in the house of Dauid,

for it must be a kingdome in the earth, and yet a kingdome of saluation. Nowe conferre these two one with an other. The house of Dauid is the tribe and stocke of Dauid, who was a man, as the subiectes of his kingdom. So that thou canst not say, that he doth here make mention of an heauenly kingdome amonge the Angells, when as he doth nothing lesse, but he speaketh of a certayne kingdome which is amonge men, which liue clothed with flesh. Dauid was a man, the subiectes of his kingdom were also men subiect to death. For as the Scripture witnesseth, man that is borne of a woman liueth but a small time, he can not passe the boundes appoynted him. Howe is it then that honour and dishonour come together in this kingdom? What agreement and consent appeareth here, where mortall men are deliuered from the power of death, where they that are worthie of death, enioy life, the vnhappie are happie, and they that are subiect to Satan, become the sonnes of God? In the reason hereof I hope that ye are sufficiently instructed, yea I thinke that ye vnderstand it as well as I my selfe. But because the texte so requireth, it must be eftsoones repeated.

A Christian is deliuered from death, sinne, & Satan.

We haue affirmed therefore, that a Christian which liueth in this kingdom, shall neuer dye, forasmuch as he can not dye. For Christ had therefore suffered death, that he might ouercome death, and deliuer vs from it. He tooke our sinnes also vpon him selfe, that we might not neede to beare them. Moreouer he subdued and ouerthrew Satan, that we might not be subiect vnto him. Wherefore it is geuen to a Christian that he can neuer dye, he can neuer be subiect to sinne and the deuill. For that must needes be true which he sayth, that he hath raysed vp an horne of blessednes or saluation. And in whatsoeuer place that horne shall be, there is no accesse neither of death, neither for sinne, nor the deuill. And that in the house of Dauid. Wherefore a Christian is both defiled and yet without sinne, and free from Satan. Howe commeth this to passe? After this sorte. Your brotherly charitie hath oftentimes heard heretofore, that God leaueth in vs an appearance and feeling of death and the deuill, so that my sinne disquieteth me and troubleth my conscience, and would driue me vnto desperation. Moreouer the iudgement of God terrifieth me, death assaileth me, as if it would deuoure me, Satan is at hande and seeketh to suppresse me. God suffereth these to remaine & ta-

A Christian after a sorte subiect to death, sinne, and Satan, & why.

beth

keth them not quite away. For this appearance must continue, that we may perceaue and feele that we are nothing else of our selues but sinners, subiect to sinne and Satan. And yet vnder this appearance lieth hid, life, innocencie, and dominion and victorie ouer sinne, Satan, hell, &c, as Christ him selfe sayth Matth. 16. Thou art Peter, and vpon this rocke wil I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not preuaile against it, he sayeth not, they shall not assaile it, nor fight against it: for these two remayne to sinne and death.

Nowe it is also expedient that I feele the biting of sinne, the terrour of the wrath of God, the horrour of death, yea and death it selfe. But all this is a certaine outward appearance before my sight and the sight of the world, which knowe and iudge none otherwise, but that sinne, death and Satan are present. Notwithstanding in the meane season vnder that assault and terrour the word and spirit are, cnouraging me, preserving me, and assuring me, that God is not angry with me, that my sinne is forgiuen me, that I shall neither dye, nor be forsaken: Vpon this foundation I haue my hart doth wholy rest. And no man hauing such a confidēce in God, remaineth vnder sinne, neither is drowned in death, but is made a conquerour of sinne and death. This is, not to preuaile or ouercome, for that albeit Satan attempteth, yet he doth not get the victorie. We call the house of Dauid, a mortall house, sinnefull, and subiect to the deuill, according to the maner of all flesh and blood, and yet notwithstanding the horne of saluation is raysed vp in the same, that men of that kingdome may enioy saluation and felicitie. Hereby ye see that this kingdom is the kingdom of faith, which can not be touched nor outwardly perceaued of any, which one can not shewe to an other, but eurry one must haue it in him self, that when he shall draw neare vnto death, shall feele sinne, or euen see death before him, he may then in faith lay hold on this kingdom, & beleue that his sinnes are forgiuee him. For Christ therefore died, that thou mightest be in this kingdom of faith. Wherefore sinne shal encounter with thee in vaine, death is taken away, Christ is with thee, who can hurt thee, who can do any euill vnto thee? Here life and death, sinne and innocencie, Christ and Satan doe fight one with an other, but Christ, life, and innocencie doe ouercome and conquer. This is soone spoken, but not so easily felt, yea the contrarie surely is rather felt. Where-

The cōfort of Christians against sinne death, & Satan.

The kingdom of faith.

fore if thou wilt esteeme and consider this kingdom according to the iudgement of the world, thou shalt vtterly erre and be deceaueth. The world calleth that a good & peaceable kingdom, where all thinges are quiet, prosperous and goe well forward, where is safetie, peace, and innocencie outwardly. But here is the kingdom of saluation and grace, although it alwayes appeare otherwise. Wherefore all these thinges are to be vnderstoode in spirit and faith, & not to be iudged according to the person or outward appearance.

Neither ought it to seeme straunge that this kingdome doth flourish in the middes of sinnes, the force of Satan & death, whereof Zacharias here singeth euen from the bottome of his hart, and knoweth well how it commeth to passe, faith and the spirit reuealing it. Concerning sinne I haue seene or knowen none in whom it is not. Whomsoeuer thou fettest before thee, sinne will by and by appeare. Paule a most holie Apostle affirmeth of him selfe, that he feeleth sinne in his members. Will, sayth he, is present with me, but I find no meanes to performe that which is good. For I do not the good thing which I would, but the euill which I would not, that do I. He wished in deede to be free from sinnes, but yet he could not but liue in them. And I such like also are also desirous to be exempted from sinnes: but that can by no meanes be brought to passe, we doe onely represse and keepe them vnder: when we haue fallen into sinne, we rise againe. But as long as we are clothed with this flesh, and beare the burden thereof about with vs, so long sinne is not extinguished nor can be wholy subdued. We may well goe about and endeuour to subdue it, notwithstanding olde Adam will lead his life also, vntill he shall dye and come vnto the graue. What shall I neede to say any more? The kingdom of Christ is a certaine speciall kingdom, wherein euery one of the Saincts is compelled to make this confession: Almightie God, vnto whose power all thinges acknowledge themselues subiect, I confesse my self to be a miserable sinner, reuenge not, I beseech thee my old iniquities. Al also must sing this song: Our father, &c. forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespasse against vs. Other righteous & holy ones, which knowe no measure or ende of their righteousnes and holines, doe vnderstand nothing hereof, and therefore this Gospell is not preached vnto them, seeing that they thinke the kingdome of Christ to be such

Euen ỹ most holy are not free from sinne. *Rom.7.18.*

such, that there is no sinne at all in it, but that all thinges in it are cleane and pure: they require such a Christian as is wholy cleane from all filth of sinne, and without sinne as Christ him selfe, such a one they shall neuer be able to finde.

Now he is a Christian, who being a sinner, confesseth him self a sinner, who hateth the feeling of sinne, striuing against it from his hart. He is not a Christian which thinketh that he hath no sinne, neither feeleth any. But if thou knowest any such, he is an Antichristian, and not a true Christian. The kingdom of Christ therefore consisteth among sinnes, it is established there where he hath set it, that is, in the house of Dauid. Yea, set Dauid him selfe before your eyes, and ye shall finde him to haue bene a sinner: who notwithstanding is bold to glory, that he is a seruaunt acceptable to his Lord. There is none of the faithfull which ought to be ashamed of this maner of praying vnto God, or of any other not much vnlike vnto it: Lord forgiue vs our sinne: is it therfore true that they haue sinne, because they say so? yea truely, for if they should lye, they should be the children of Satan. But godly Christians are weary of this life, greatly desiring the life to come. Now it is not giuen vnto them in this earth to goe so farre, that they may say: We are subiect to no vices, we are cleane from all sinne: if they shall goe so farre, it is Satan that deceiueth them. Notwithstanding they are sory for their sinnes, and doe lament them, yea it grieueth them to the heart, that they must beare the miserable burden of this flesh, and they cry out together with S. Paule *Rom. 7.* O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the body of this death? This shrich and crie all the faithfull doe giue, for that feeling sinne, they doe most earnestly desire to be deliuered from it. And in this feeling & knowledge of sinne, the kingdom of Christ consisteth, so, that euen in sinne there is no sinne. That is, albeit I doe both acknowledge and feele sinne, yet saluation and the kingdom doe so firmely abide in my conscience, that God sayth vnto me: I will forgiue thee thy sinne, for that thou hast faith, and beleuest in Christ my especially beloued Sonne, who was deliuered to death for thee, neither shall thy sinnes hurt thee. Others, which feele not their sinnes, but trust in their workes, and complaine nothing of their faultes and offences, thinking them selues cleane: such are giuen to Satan, & not receiued or admitted into the kingdom of Christ: for they which

Though the godly haue sinne in thē & feele the grieuousnes thereof, yet it doth not hurt them.

are partakers of this kingdom can not be without conflicts and tribulation.

Death, Satan and the world doe somewhat trouble the godly, but the godly at the last ouercome them. *Psal.* 118.18.

And that I may speake more plainly, recken I pray thee, any of the Sainctes, whom death doth not trouble: yea I know thou shalt not finde one, which is not afraid, and trembleth not at the horrible sight of death. But the conscience taketh comfort here by the Prophet Dauid, who sayth: The Lord hath chastened and corrected me, but he hath not giuen me ouer vnto death: it fighteth against vs in deede, but it preuaileth not. Thus a Christian wrapped in sinnes, is both vnder sinnes and aboue sinnes, & at the last notwithstanding obtaineth the victorie. After the same sort also must he haue to doe with Satan, with whome he must wrastle all his life, and at the last ouercome him. So in the world also he must suffer many conflicts and troubles, and yet at length become victor. For although it be a kingdom of saluation, which hath neither rest nor quietnes, but suffreth the force of hel, death, the deuill, sinne, and all maner of aduersitie and tribulation, yet they which be in it, doe with an inuincible courage endure, and at length ouercome all euills. But God therefore permitteth these thinges, that our faith may be exercised, and shewe forth it selfe. Moreouer that is a pleasure to the conscience, and bringeth vnto it comfort and ioy, that it hath such a kingdom, that it may say: Blessed be the Lord God, who hath visited and redeemed vs, and hath raysed vp a kingdom in the house of Dauid. That is, for that he visiteth vs by his word, deliuereth vs from sinnes, and maketh vs conquerours ouer death and Satan.

Thus ye haue heard both that a kingdom is rayse vp in the house of Dauid, and also that a Christian is both dead and yet aliue, is innocent in the middes of sinnes, and although he be subiect to Satan, yet notwithstanding hath dominion ouer Satan. For both are true, for that sinne, death, hell doe assaile the flesh, but doe not ouercome, forasmuch as this kingdom of saluation triumpheth ouer them all. Wherefore as it were with a certaine great boldnes or confidence he calleth it a horne, that is a stronge and puissant kingdom: Which hath no rest or truce, but being assailed of many and stronge enemies, is alwayes diligently occupied in defence of it self, and doth notably repell the force of the enemie. So a Christian laying hold on this horne, ouerthroweth sinne, death, and Satan. Neither consisteth this horne in our strength,

strength, neither are we makers thereof: for God hath made and rayſed it vp by the miniſterie of his word, whereby we are ſaued. Wherefore Zacharias ſo ſingeth, that his ſonge hath reſpect not to his own ſonne, but to Chriſt. Yea he celebrateth this kingdom as pertaining to the Iewes onely, and declareth that it ſhall be glorious, and maketh no mention of the Gentiles, how they alſo ſhould come vnto it, as beſide others, Simeon in his ſong, the beginning whereof is, Lorde nowe letteſt thou, &c. did prophecie, that we Gentiles alſo are choſen into that kingdom. But here he foretelleth of a kingdom rayſed vp of God to the Iewes, euen a kingdom of ſaluation and bleſſednes, and that in the houſe of his ſeruaunt Dauid. Wherefore he ſayth moreouer:

Verſe. 70. As he ſpake by the mouth of his holy Prophetes: which haue bene ſince the world beganne.

Therefore he hath raiſed vp this kingdom, that he might confirme his promiſe, wherby he had foretold that he would ſomtime raiſe vp a kingdom, &c. And nowe that time is come, wherein he will fulfill that his promiſe. So Zacharias reduceth the horne of ſaluation, the kingdom of Chriſt, to the olde Teſtament, that out of it he may bring witneſſes of ſo ſtrong and puiſſant a kingdom. For the Prophets from the time of Dauid did all prophecie, that the ſeede of Dauid ſhould haue a kingdom in the earth, yet a ſpirituall kingdom: and aboue the reſt Eſai and Ieremie foretold, that it ſhoulde be ſuch a kingdome, that the gouernment thereof ſhould conſiſt in the ſpirit and word, to theſe eſpecially Zacharias hath here reſpect. The other as Oſee, Micheas, and the reſt, doe ſpeake of the ſame kingdom, but not ſo manifeſtly.

The Prophets foretold of the kingdom, that ſhould be rayſed vp in the houſe of Dauid.

Verſe. 71. That he would deliuer vs from our enemies, and from the handes of all that hate vs.

The Euangeliſt hath hitherto generally rehearſed, what that kingdom of Chriſt is, whereof the Prophetes prophecied. Nowe he ſpeaketh of it alſo, but particularly, declaring wherein it conſiſteth. Firſt in this, that he deliuereth vs from the handes of our enemies, yea and from all them that hate vs. Ye ſee here and vnderſtand, moſt dearely beloued, that this verſe doth witnes & moſt

Wherein this kingdom of ſaluation conſiſteth.

plainely declare, that we which are his people and kingdom, doe liue amongest enemies, and that no other is to be looked for of vs but to be hated of them: That also the force, qualitie, and nature of this kingdom consisteth in this, that it deliuereth vs out of the handes of all them that hate vs, as the Prophet Dauid sayeth Psal. 110. The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler in the middes of thine enemies. And Psal. 45. Thine arrowes are very sharpe, euen in the middes of the Kings enemies. It is a delight vnto Christ that his kingdome is set in the middes of the light, yea and in the middest of the haters thereof. These things are written for our comfort, that we which mind to serue vnder the Prince of this kingdom, be so instructed, that we looke for no other then is here prescribed and sette forth vnto vs: that we seeke not here to get vnto vs the fauour of the world, neither that we serue the worlde, and labour to haue no enemies therein. For the words of Zacharias declare that it is the quality of this kingdom to deliuer from enemies. Now if it deliuereth vs from enemies, & as it were draweth vs out of the handes of them that hate vs, surelie it can not be a kingdome of peare, but such a kingdom as is subiect to the hatred and malice of the world. As ye see at this daye, that our enemies beare a deadlie hatred vnto the light, which hath a litle shined forth, thankes be to Christ therefore. No man is any where so hated as a Christian. Both the Pope, and the furious Bishops with their false Apostles, also the raging Princes, moreouer the bolle, learned, and wise of the world, all at this day doe most bitterly hate Christians. Neither are they content, that they be killed and slaine, but the would haue them extinguished and vtterly rooted out, that there may be no memorie of them, as they thinke, left among men. And this is the state, these are the badges, and cognisances of Christians: that when Satan by his ministers persecuteth vs, he thinketh quite to roote vs out. This verse also geueth vs to vnderstande, that Christ is our King, that he may saue and deliuer vs out of the handes of our enemies: which he notablie performeth, and sheweth his power in the middes of the worlde, in the middes of the force of flesh and Satan, when as peace and quietnes is no where left to a Christian, but in his Christ alone. This also we must marke, that there is not one but many, which assayle & persecute Christians: but yet that we shall not therefore be destroyed,

The godly must looke for no peace or quietnes in the world.

ed, forasmuch as we haue one, which is stronger both then the world and the Prince thereof as Iohn sayth. Now whereas he promiseth vs, we know certainly, that he both will and is able to performe: we shall in deede feele the assault, but he will not suffer vs to be destroyed or ouercome, so that we hope and trust in him. It followeth moreouer:

Verse. 72. That he might shewe mercye towards our fathers, and remember his holy couenant.

Verse. 73. That is, the othe which he sware to our father Abraham that he would giue vs.

He will deliuer vs, not onely from all euill both of body and especially of soule, but also from our enemies, Satan, and men, & as a Christian must be as it were ouerwhelmed with all euills together, so also he shal be againe wholy deliuered from all euils. And he sheweth that this grace and blessing was promised to their fathers. Such is the maner of the Apostles also, that they often times haue recourse to the olde Testament, as I haue sayd before, that God spake and promised by the mouth of the Prophets, &c. euen as Zacharias doth in this place. Some man may now say: They are dead, how therefore will he shew mercy vnto them? Agayne, what neede is there to rehearse, that he would shew mercy to the fathers, when as it is declared in ỳ Prophets? But this is therefore done, that the truth of God may be shewed forth, and may be also approued vnto vs, that we should not be ignorant, that those things are not due to our merits. In the first booke of Moises is mentioned, how God promised to Abraham, that in his seede all the nations of ỳ earth should be blessed. That is, that by Christ should come peace, grace, and blessing to all nations. Which promise was differred so long a tyme, that it appeared, that it was in vaine and abolished. So vnwise, as it seemeth to the worlde, doth God shewe him selfe in his matters, as though all thinges went backward. Notwithstanding howsoeuer it was delayed and seemed, yet it is fulfilled and performed whatsoeuer was promised to Abraham, and God hath not onely deliuered him from his enemies, but hath bestowed vpon him all good things, yea hath giuen him selfe vnto him, and all that he hath. And all this is therefore done, for that (as Zacharias here

An obiectiō.

The aūswer.

Gen. 22. 18.

sayth) this mercy and goodnes was before promised and confirmed by an oth vnto them, which are long since dead, when as we yet were not. He is mercifull therefore and fauourable, not because of our merits, as though he did owe it vnto our righteousnes, but of his onely grace, fauour, and mercy.

God both promised, & fulfilled his promise, not moued through any workes or merits of men, but of his meere grace and mercy.

These are horrible thundrings against our merits & workes, that we can not glory, that we haue deliuered our selues from sinnes, or that we haue deserued his goodnes, and the preaching of the Gospell. No, it is not so. Here is no place for boasting: but this text sayth, that thou, O Lord, didst promise certaine thowsands of yeares before I was borne, that thou wouldest doe it. Who did then desire him, that he would giue vs those thinges, when he had determined with him selfe to giue them? And vpon this promise the Prophets are bold and doe stay them selues, for by it we attaine vnto true goodnes, that the mouth of euery one may be stopped, that he that will glory, may glory in the Lord. For thus the Lord may say: that thou liuest in my kingdom, that thou enioyest my goodnes and grace, it is not to be imputed to thee, but vnto me: I promised, and determined with my selfe to fulfill my promises, thou being ignorant thereof. And here the mouth of euery one is stopped. So at this day also none of vs, vnto whom, thankes be to God, the Gospell hath shined, can glory that we obtained it by our owne meanes, labour, endeuour, or good conuersation. For those which were counted ỳ best works, and the most excellent studies are disallowed and ouerthrowne, as to celebrate masse, to ioyne him selfe to this or that hypocriticall sect, which they call an order, &c. These the Gospell condemneth and reiecteth, and how can I attaine to the Gospell by that which it reiecteth? Wherefore this standeth sure and certaine, that all that we haue, is of the meere grace and goodnes of God, so that with this honour and praise we may confesse, that we haue deserued farre otherwise, namely hel fire, if besids this he bestoweth any thing vpon vs, it is the gift of his grace and goodnes. And this is that which Zacharias sayth, that is, was foretold by the Prophets, and both promised and confirmed by an oth to the fathers, that he would performe vnto vs the couenant made to Abraham. Thus he saith to Abraham: By my self haue I sworne, sayth the Lorde, that in blessing I will blesse thee. And in thy seede, &c. Which words the Prophets diligently held, marked,

Gen.22.16.

handled,

handled, and alwayes trusted vnto them, for that he doth here solemnely sweare, that he might wholy assure vs, that he would poure forth his blessing vpon vs. And now the time is present, the hower is come, wherein he hath sworne, that saluation should come vnto vs, as it is declared *Mar. 16.* Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospell to euery creature: he that shall beleue and be baptised, shall be saued: but he that will not beleue, shal be damned. Yea surely haue not merited it, no not Abraham himselfe, who was not made partaker of the promise, seeing that he dyed long before the fulfilling thereof. In spirite, in deede, and faith he was partaker of it, but he liued not so long, till the Gospel was reuealed to the whole world. The promise therfore was made vnto him, although, as I haue sayd, he looked not for the fulfilling thereof in this life. That is, his life was not prolonged vntill the preaching of the Gospell in the whole world, although in faith he obtained the Gospell for him selfe. Wherefore it can not be sayd, that that promise was due to his merits, otherwise he must haue liued in the earth vntill the fulfilling thereof, and a due price or reward must haue bene payd vnto him. But now the performing of the promise was after his death, so that euery one must needes confesse, that that promise was not made to Abraham because of his merits.

Abraham merited not the promise.

Againe, it can not be sayd, that the Gentiles which enioy this promise, haue obtained it by their merits, which then were not. God promiseth to the fathers and performeth not, he performeth to the Gētiles, to whom notwithstanding no promise was made, who all at that time were not. God will alwayes retayne to him selfe his honour, and be the same God, although the wicked world can not be so perswaded. He chasteneth, reproueth, rebuketh, prouoketh, stirreth, allureth, doth whatsoeuer is to be done, but the worldlings rob him of his honour, and attribute it to them selues, that is, they will not acknowledge, that whatsoeuer they possesse or haue, it commeth vnto them by the onely grace of God. When therefore we glory of such good thinges, and acknowledge not God to be the author and giuer of them, we make our selues as God, and him as our seruaunt. So he is dishonoured, and the honour attributed vnto vs. But albeit we make marchandize of his honour, yet he hath affirmed in the Scriptures, that he will kepe his honour and glorie onely to him selfe, that so he may be ac-

The Gentiles merited not the enioying of the promise.

knowledged to giue all thinges of his meere and onely grace. These thinges he that beleueth, doth also receiue them: he that doth not beleue, shall at the length receiue his due reward. Zacharias sayth moreouer:

Verse.74. That we being deliuered out of the handes of our enemies, might serue him without feare,

Verse.75. All the dayes of our life, in holines and righteousnes before him.

He hath defined the nature and property of this kingdom: that is, the couenant made with Abraham, that in his seede all the nations of the earth should be blessed, &c. Which words of blessing, thus sayth he, I will interpret vnto you, that being deliuered out of the handes of our enemies, we may serue him without feare all our life long in holines and righteousnes before him. Which to the world and our flesh sauoureth not well. For the world thus murmureth here: I had thought that he would haue giuen vs some precious thing, as a purse well stuffed with money, a rich wife, fayre and bewtifull children, goodly houses, and whatsoeuer the world is delighted in. But now I perceiue it to be otherwise, I heare that we must without feare serue him in holines & righteousnes, and so please him. Wherefore it shall be meete that we apply hereunto spirituall eyes and eares, that we may more rightly consider and vnderstand the wordes. Whereas he sayth, that he will deliuer vs from all our enemies, it is againe thus to be vnderstood, that this kingdom is placed in the middes of enemies, and notwithstanding that it is not therefore destroyed, but that alwayes all the enemies and aduersaries thereof are ouercome. We must vnderstand also that the deliuerance from our enemies tendeth hereunto, that we should alwayes obey him that deliuereth vs, without any feare. And this is a Christian thing, and an amiable kingdome, that a Christian shall leade his life without feare. Howbeit God hath bestowed this vpon vs, that we should hereafter serue him alone.

A Christian how he liueth without feare.

The wordes without feare, include in them, that we shall quietly enioy the good things of this present world, and of the world to come. For a Christian is sure and certaine of the forgiuenes of his sinnes, although he as yet feeleth them, as we haue sayd a little.

cle before. It is certaine that death hath no power in him: that Satan doth not ouercome him: that the world can not preuaile against him. Such a hart is without all perill and feare, & plainly free from them. Which doe not thou so vnderstande, as though we do not feele sinne at all, but that we are greatly grieued when sinnes trouble vs, when the image or sight of death terrifieth vs, when as being reproched and sclaundered of the world, we stand as destitute, and haue none in this earth, to whom we may turne vs or resorte for succour, but God alone. These thinges in deede are felt, but they doe not preuaile nor ouercome vs: for the hart notwithstanding remaineth safe and quiet in God. So pouertie also is felt, when thou art pinched with hunger, & hast not wherewithall to fill thy bellie, to maintayne thy wife and bringe vp thy children, nor any certaine place where to dwell and abide, but all these thinges shall not hurt thee: thou must aske of God whatsoeuer thou needest, & serue him without feare, as our present text declareth. But herein we doe for the most part behaue our selues not as Christians, we iudge after our owne affection and sense, according as the world doth blame vs, or report euill of vs. Also when our fieldes haue no corne, no money is in our purse, we thinke our selues vtterly destitute and forsaken. But a true Christian with shut eyes and eares sayth with Paule speaking to the Galathians: O flesh, sinne, death, ye are dead vnto me: and I againe am dead vnto you, that Christ may liue in me. The world is crucified vnto me, and I vnto the world. That is, the world hath no care or regard of me, and my preaching and life is mocked and scorned of it. But with the same measure that thou measurest vnto me, I will measure to thee againe: if thou despisest me, I also will despise thee: if thou makest no account of me, I againe will make small account of thee. *Gal. 2 & 6.*

What care I, if the world hate me, when as I displease not him that dwelleth in heauen? if this hatred continue euen dayly, if sinne rage, and the worlde talke and prate many thinges, what then? let it do so vntill it be wearie, I will passe ouer these things as if I heard them not. This is in deede to forsake the world, and to die vnto it, to liue without feare, to be occupied about no other thing, but that which is according to Gods will, to speake nothing at all but that which shall please him, and which I shall know to be agreeable to his worde: that I may liue so, and vse

those workes, which I know certainly are acceptable before him, that in my whole life whatsoeuer I doe either outwardly, or inwardly, I may be certaine that I seeke his glorie, and endeuour to fulfill his will. So I am separated from the worlde, and notwithstanding doe still liue in the worlde. No man is lesse in the worlde then a sincere Christian: and againe, no man is more occupied and hath to doe with the worlde then an entire Christian. That is, the world doth more intentiuely looke vnto him, & Satan more often & vehemently assaileth him, then him that is ignorant of Christ, of grace, and of faith. Christ and Paule had experience hereof: they had combats & conflicts with the world: they were troubled & molested, yea the whole world was against thē. Againe, a true Christian is not in the world, albeit þ world rage and fret cruelly against him: for he alwayes trusteth in God, and sayth: Lord, I am thine, thou shalt deale well with me, graunt thou that my matters may go forward according to thy will, only be thou on my side, and I shall be in safetie.

All the dayes of our life. All our life long, that is continually, without ceassing.

In holines and righteousnes before him. Here S. Luke diuideth righteousnes and holines into two sortes: of which one is acceptable before God: þ other before him is of no value: whereby we haue to vnderstand, that both the righteousnes and holines of God are in no estimation before the worlde, euen as the world is wont nothing to esteeme God, and againe God litle to esteeme the world. For that which God calleth iust, the world calleth vniust: and that which it calleth right, God calleth crooked: and so these two Champions are continually at variance betwene themselues. That which God calleth holy, seemeth to the world deuilish and vnrighteous. Wherefore he comforteth vs here, declaring that there be two sortes of righteousnes and holines: One, which we ought to obserue diligently: An other which we ought to auoide. Hitherto it hath bene the chiefe holines and righteousnes of all, which could be inuented, to runne into Monasteries, to put on monkish apparel, to be shauen, to weare a hempen girdle, to giue him selfe to fasting and prayer, to be clothed with heare cloth, to lye in wollen garmentes, to obserue an austere maner of liuing: and in a summe, to take vppon him monkish holines and religion. And thus sticking in a colourable shew of good workes,

Hypocritical holynes and righteousnes

we knewe none other but that we were holy from top to toe: hauing regard onely to workes and the body, and not to the hart, where we were full of hatred, feare, & incredulitie, troubled with an euill conscience, knowing almost nothing rightly of God. Thē the world cryed openly: O that holy man: O holy and chast woman, which haue included them selues within the walls of Monasteries, which day and night kneling vpon their knees say many rosaries, as they call them. O, what holines is there, where euen God him selfe dwelleth, where the holy Ghost the comforter abideth present? These thinges the world boasteth of, and greatly esteemeth. But beside these they doe not marke, how they pray with no earnestnes of hart, how they teach and instruct no man, how they giue nothing to any, but catch vnto them selues both the blood and sweat of the poore, and leaue true sincere workes vndone. This righteousnes & holines the world extolleth, which notwithstanding stinketh and is wholy vncleane before God, which he will haue euen to be vnknowne vnto vs, yet the world refuseth to admit any other.

The righteousnes wher of God accepteth, of what sort it is.

But there is an other maner of righteousnes then this where of God esteemeth & accepteth, which also we must consider, now it is of this sort: It consisteth not in a gray garment, not in a blacke or white coule, but in a pure conscience. To wit, when I beleue, that Christ is my saluation, and that my workes can preuaile nothing hereunto: but that he doth all thinges which God hath regard vnto. Then I say no more: a gray garment is holy, a red garment is prophane, forasmuch as I know, that not in a gray or any other garment, but in Christ all thinges consist. For no man can attaine to this, that a gray garment may cleanse his hart from filth, or that a Monasterie may purifie it: for it is necessary that God onely purifie the hart by faith, & the holy Ghost, as Peter witnesseth *Act. 15.* When the hart is now pure, the house is vnto it as the field, and the fielde as the house: The market is as much esteemed of it as the Monasterie, and contrariwise. Neither remaineth there vnto me any worke, place, or garment, which I count prophane: for all things are alike vnto me, after that holines hath fully possessed my hart. That euen God sayth vnto me: Thou art godly, I am thy father, thou art my sonne. And herein we ought to persist, that we be holy, and without feare doe obey and serue him. Here the title and badges of a

Christian are seene, and this is his cognisance, to wit, that being holy, he is the Minister of God without feare. But what sinner is there which dareth challenge to him selfe this title? Let one come forth, which dareth auouch him selfe to be godly, righteous, holy, and the seruaunt of God, destitute of no good things either of mind or body. Now he that can not glory of these things, is not a Christian. For of these thinges must a sincere Christian be partaker. But what letteth that one dareth not challenge to him selfe this title? Euen a timorous conscience: for we alwaies feele sinne, and our life is euer fraile. I see nothing but an honest life, although God require this also of vs, yet he will not be content therewith, but there is neede that there be yet a certain higher thing, that I dare be bolde to say: Lorde God maker of the whole world, I am certaine that I am holy before thee, and am thy seruaunt, not for myne owne sake, who doe as yet feele sinnes in my selfe, but through Christ, who hath taken away my sinne, and made satisfaction for me. These thinges surely I ought to glory of, if I be a true Christian.

But this seemeth difficult and hard: God admitteth no sinne, my fearefull and weake conscience is against me. How am I his seruaunt, when as notwithstanding I feele in my selfe, that I serue the deuill, and doe not know that I am holy? I speake not here of the common sort of Christians, such as I, and such like are: but of sincere Christians, which haue a good conscience, and in whose hartes the spirite of God abideth, whose conscience albeit it be fraile and weake, and they feele their sinnes, yet they are enforced to say: Howsoeuer sinne is, yet I know no sinne by my selfe, neither am I subiect to death and hell, and for this cause they striue, and at the last ouercome, that therefore they would euen dye, in that confidence. But I finde it farre otherwise, if I set my life before my sight. Here life and the word must be separated farre asunder. If thou wilt consider life, I will set also before thee the liues of S. Peter, Paule, or Iohn, thou shalt finde euen them not to haue liued without sinne. When thou desirest to be holy before God, trust not to thy life, vnlesse thou wilt perish for euer. For thou must trust to onely mercye and grace, and not to life or workes, otherwise thy case will be very ill. Wherefore our hart must be so affected that it say: Lorde, if thou shouldest call me to an account, I should not be able either by life or workes to stand

We must trust, not to our life and workes, but to the mere mercy and grace of god

ſtande in thy ſight, no although I were euen Iohn the Baptiſt. Neuertheles therefore I glorie that I am godly, & thy ſeruaunt, for that thou doeſt giue vnto me continually, and alſo for that, as thou haſt promiſed to Abraham, thou doeſt for thy Chriſts ſake, vouchſafe to ſhewe thy mercie vnto me: if ſo be that I of my ſelfe be not godly and righteous, yet he is godly and righteous for me: If I be prophane, he is holy: if I be not the ſeruaunt of God, he is the ſeruaunt of God: if I be not without feare and carefulnes, yet he is voyde of all feare and carefulnes: that ſo I may as it were transferre my ſelfe from my ſelfe, and perſe into him, and glorie, that in Chriſt & by Chriſt I am good. Thus he will haue vs to glorie, that we are godly and holy, but not by our owne merite: for we muſt glorie of our ſelues, as of moſt deſperate wretches.

And that this may be plaine, marke our life, conſider our good conuerſation and maners, wepe howe fooliſhly men applie themſelues to the Goſpell, that I am almoſt in dout, whether I ſhould preach any more or no. For as ſoone as theſe thinges are taught in a ſermon, that ſaluation conſiſteth not in our workes or life, but in the giftes of God, euerie one is ſlow to doe good, no man will liue an honeſt life, and be any more obedient, they falſely affirme euerie where, that good workes are inhibited. Neuertheles God requireth of vs, that we lead an honeſt life outwardly, and he that doth not ſo ſhall at length finde his due puniſhment. Nowe if it happen that we liue godlily and honeſtly outwardly, Satan by and by frameth his wickednes. Neither doe I knowe at this day how to order my ſelfe in this matter, not becauſe of my owne perſon, but becauſe of life. For if we preach of an honeſt and godly life, the worlde by & by furiouſly attempteth without iudgement, * to build ladders to heauen: which God neither can, neither will by any meanes ſuffer: Againe, a diſhoneſt and ignominious life doth not become Chriſtians, neither doth a delicate life become them. What therefore muſt we then doe? They which haue reſpect onely to an honeſt and fayre life, it were better for them to be adulterers and adultereſſes, and altogether to wallowe in the myre. And yet notwithſtanding God will not haue vs to lead our life filthily and diſhoneſtly. For neither can he ſuffer that, adiudging thee euen vnto hell therefore, if thou ſo doe. And if thou lead an honeſt life, thou wilt ſticke in it, and arrogate vnto thy ſelfe,

* They endeuour by their good workes to attaine to ſaluation. We muſt neither preſume of good workes, nor neglect to leade a godly life.

which againe he can not ſuffer. Thou muſt therefore ſo prouide that thou remaine in the middle path, declining neither to the right hand, nor to the left, and that thou lead a quiet, fayre, and amiable life in the ſight of the world: which alſo may be acceptable before God, and yet that thou doe not therefore ſo greatly eſteeme it, nor count ſo of it, as though thou doeſt merit any thing of God thereby.

Blaſphemous to affirme our ſelues holy by our works

Thus a Chriſtian continueth the holy ſeruaunt of God without feare, not by his good workes and holie life, but by the grace of Chriſt. But he that affirmeth that he is holie by his workes, is blaſphemous againſt God, robbeth God of his honour, and denieth Chriſt, for whom it were better, that he were tenne times an homicide, or an adulterer, then that he ſhould therby affirme him ſelfe to be a Chriſtian, yea godly and holy: for he doth plainly diſhonour Chriſt, and it is as much as to affirme that there is no Chriſt: for he is therefore called Chriſt, for that he is our grace, mercie, redemption, and holines. If I ſhould not attribute to the diuine mercie, that God him ſelfe doth ſaue me, what ſhould this be elſe, but to ſay, that he is neither holy nor bleſſed? Wherefore if I be a Chriſtian, I muſt confeſſe, that I am holy and a Chriſtian for this cauſe, for that Chriſt him ſelfe is holie. And albeit my conſcience doth reproue me of ſinne, yet I muſt ſtill perſeuer in this, that his holines is greater then my ſinnes. Thus I muſt liue honeſtly outwardly, but inwardly reſt and truſt in him alone. It followeth moreouer howe Zacharias turneth his ſpeech to the child, and ſayth:

Verſe.76. And thou child ſhalt be called the Prophet of the moſt High: for thou ſhalt goe before the face of the Lord to prepare his wayes.

John the forerunner of Chriſt.

This ſhall be thy office: Thou ſhalt be the firſt, and ſhalt firſt begin: that is, thou ſhalt be the Prophet of the moſt High: But what maner of prophecie ſhall that be, how ſhall it be done: After this ſort: Thou ſhalt be the forerunner of the Lorde, & ſhalt prepare his wayes. When any Prince commeth, certaine goe before him, to prepare way and place for him, and ſay: Giue place, depart out of the way: John doing the like, runneth before and crieth vnto the people: Goe aſide, turne out of the waye, giue place, the Lorde him ſelfe commeth. Such a ſeruaunt is John,

whom

whom the Lord by and by followeth. Such things no Prophet at any time hath spoken but they haue prophesied of these thinges, that a Prophet should somtime come, which should erect a kingdom that should continue for euer, &c. But all dyed, not one remayned, which did behold this being aliue. But this Prophet doth liue euen at that time, when the Lord him selfe commeth, & by and by followeth him. For the Gospell was begon to be preached, Baptisme was begon to be ministred, by the comming and ministerie of Iohn, who ceasing, Christ began, both almost in the same peare. Now what shall be his office? This truly, to prepare a way for the Lorde. Which preparation is nothing else, but to bring people to the Lord the Sauiour. Christ is the grace, gift, King and horne of our saluation. This Lord and King no man receaueth, vnles he be first humbled, that he thinke nothing of him selfe. For he can not otherwise attaine vnto Christ, neither can stand together, to receaue the grace of God by gift, & also to merit the same. Iohn therefore in this parte teacheth men nothing else, but that they are sinners and altogether nothing. He nowe which acknowledgeth him selfe, and feeleth him selfe a sinner before, yea and to be nothing, wel vnderstandeth the voice of Iohn, which is, prepare ye a way for the Lord: Giue place to him: He is at hand that followeth me, who is greater then I, him ye shall beare, him ye shal obey. The other office of Iohn which followeth, is, that he bringeth men to the knowledge of saluation, and sheweth with his finger that paschall Lambe, that taketh away our sinnes, that he may fasten them to the crosse with him selfe and abolish them. Whereof Zacharias now goeth on to speake. The office of Iohn.

Verse.77. To giue knowledge of saluation vnto his people, by the remission of their sinnes.

That is, thou shalt begin the office and ministery of the word, whereby is taught and learned how one is saued. Which saluation or blessednes consisteth in this, not howe we may be famous through great aboundance of riches, glorie, and power in earth, as the Iewes haue hitherto vnderstoode it: but that we may obtayne remission of sinnes, and be made partakers of the grace of God. Now where remission of sinnes is, there is no merit, no reward or satisfaction, otherwise it could not be called remission of Wherein blessednes consisteth.

sinnes. So that this knowledge is, to vnderstand, how God forgiueth vs our sinnes without workes and merites, and saueth vs by meere grace and mercy, as it followeth:

Verse. 78. Through the tender mercy of our God, wherby the day springe from an high hath visited vs.

Here it appeareth that they which teache and obserue lawes, workes, and merits, do striue both against the mercy of God and knowledge of saluatiō. For he sayth not that forgiuenes of sinnes hath come by the prayers or workes of the fathers, or of any of the Sainctes, but through the bottomles mercie of God, which Luke calleth the tender mercy, and such mercy as commeth from the most inward affection and bowells. Notwithstanding this forgiuenesse of sinne, which commeth vnto vs by mercie, is not without merit, although it commeth to passe without our merit: but a Mediatour commeth betwene, who hath in our steade deserued it for vs, which is Christ our Lorde. For God would that satisfaction should be made vnto him for our sinnes, and that his honour and lawe shoulde be performed, here we were able to doe nothing. But Christ alone both was able, and satisfied for vs who of the infinit mercy of the father, was sent for the same cause, and that to vs, that he might dispatch it. Therefore he saith, Through which infinit and bottomlesse mercy the day spring from an high hath visited vs. Without al dout it was no merit, but only vnmeasurable mercie, that Christ came to vs, and merited and obtained for vs such remission of sinnes vnto eternall saluation. Nowe he calleth him, the day spring from an hie, which signifieth vnto vs his diuinitie. And this is his meaning: on hie, that is, aboue all creatures, where nothing is hier, but height alone, there is Christ in his diuinitie, as the morning or day spring. For he proceedeth from the father, as the beames doe from the sunne, whereof we haue elsewhere spoken at large.

Forgiuenes of sinnes cōmeth not by any merit or worke of ours, but through the tender mercy of God.

Verse. 79. To giue light to them that sit in darkenes, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feete into the way of peace.

Many of the fathers vnderstood this of Lymbus, as they call it:

it: but Luke agreeth here with the saying of Esai, where he saith: The people that walked in darkenes, haue seene a great light, &c. His meaning therefore is this: Christ therefore came, that he might be the light of the world, and by the Gospell might enlighten mens harts, and allure them to him selfe, which were held captiue vnder Satan in the blindnes and darkenes of incredulitie, that so he might guide our feete into the way of peace, that is, he might gouerne our conscience well, quietly and cherefully in the kingdom of grace, that we may be afraid neither of Satan, neither of sinne, death, hell, nor of any aduersitie, who heretofore haue rested, part of vs in filthy vices, part in good workes, notwithstanding we could on neither side enioy any quietnes or peace, but were compelled to despeire vnder Satan, and the feare of death, neither did we know how to finde that way which leadeth vnto peace, according to the saying of the fourteenth Psalme: The way of peace haue they not knowne, &c. Thus ye haue heard howe Zacharias doth in most goodly and fit wordes most liuely paint out the Gospell and kingdom of Christ, with all the frutes, colours and conditions thereof, that it is a word and kingdom of grace, of forgiuenes of sinnes, also a kingdom of peace, ioy, quietnes, saluation and all goodnes. God graunt that we may throughly know and feele the same. Amen.

Esai 9.1.

How Christ is the light of the world

How Christ guideth our feete into the way of peace.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER OF THE MEDITATION OF CHRIST HIS PASSION.

FIrst, some doe so thinke vpon the passion of Christ, that they are incensed with anger against the Iewes, and doe inueigh against wretched Iudas in longes and reprochfull wordes: and thus they are content, and thinke this to be sufficient, euen as they are wont in lamenting the case of other, to take pity

on them, and to accuse and condemne their aduersaries. But that can not be called a remembring of the passion of Christ, but rather of Iudas and Iudas his wickednes.

Secondly, some haue noted in their mindes diuerse commodities and frutes proceeding of the meditation of Christes passion, that saying which is ascribed to Albertus being commonly in their remembrance, that it is better to thinke vpon the passion of Christ superficially or once, then if one should fast the space of a whole yeare, and daily in praying goe ouer the whole Psalter, &c. That they follow hitherto, being blind and iustly stumbling, contrary to the true frute of the Lords passion. Moreouer they seeke their owne thinges therein, and therefore they bringe with them images, bookes, letters and crosses. Some also goe so farre, that they thinke they shall make them selues safe from waters, terrors, fire, and from all daunger, as though the Lordes suffering should be without suffering in them, contrary to the qualitie and nature thereof.

Thirdly, some haue compassion of Christ, lamenting and weeping for him as being an innocent man, like vnto the women which followed Christ from Ierusalem, who were reprehended and admonished of him, that they should weepe for them selues & for their children.

Fourthly, some so call to mind the passion of the Lord, and so consider Christ, that inwardly they are sore afraid, yea their reason also or vnderstanding is turned into a certaine astoniednes or bashfulnes. Which feare notwithstanding ought to procede from hence especially, in that we should be put in mind thereby of the wrath and immutable seueritie of God prepared for sinnes and sinners, forasmuch as he would not graunt to his onely begotten and beloued sonne that sinners should be absolued and pardoned, vnles he did make so great a satisfaction for them, as he speaketh by Esay chap. 53: For the transgression of my people haue I smitten him. What shall come vnto the sinner, when a sonne so exceedingly beloued is smitten? It must needes be that there is an vnspeakeable and a most serious and earnest matter, where so great and excellent a person doth descend to doe good vnto him, & suffereth and dyeth for him.

How the passion of Christ ought to terrifie vs.

Esay 53. 8.

Fiftly, reuolue deepely in thy mind, and doubt not a whit, that thou art he which so tormented Christ, forasmuch as thy sinnes were

were moſt certainly the cauſe thereof. Thus S. Peter in the ſecond of the Acts, did ſtrike and terrifie the Iewes as it were with a certaine lightning, when as he ſaid vnto them generally: whom you haue crucified, ſo that the very ſame day three thouſand men were greatly terrified, and being pricked in their hartes ſayd vnto the Apoſtles: Men and brethren what ſhall we doe? Wherefore when thou conſidereſt that his handes were pearſed with nayles, thinke that it was thy worke: when thou remembreſt his crowne of thornes, perſwade thy ſelfe that it was thy wicked cogitations, which cauſed it, &c.

Sixtly, thinke with thy ſelfe, that whereas one thorne pricked Chriſt, thou oughteſt worthely to be pricked with an hundred thowſand thornes, & that without intermiſſion, yea & much more grieuouſly: and that whereas one nayle pearſed the hands and feete of Chriſt, thou oughteſt to be grieued and moleſted with many moe and farre more sharpe nailes continuallie, euen as it ſhall come at the laſt vnto thoſe, in whome the paſſion of Chriſt hath not bene effectuall but fruſtrate. For Chriſt who is the truth it ſelfe, will lye to no man, will delude no man, and that which he attempteth muſt needes be a matter of exceeding great importance and wonderfull high.

Seuenthly, ſuch feare Bernard had conceiued hereof when he ſayd: I did play abroad in the ſtreete, and in the Kinges priuie chamber ſentence of death was giuen vpon me. The Kinges only begotten ſonne hearing this, layd of his diademe & came forth, clothed in ſackcloth, his head ſprinkeled with aſhes, & bare foote, weeping and crying out that his ſeruaunt was condemned to death. I beholding him ſodenly comming forth, am amaſed at the ſtraungenes thereof, I aske and harken after the cauſe. What ſhall I doe? ſhall I play ſtill and delude his teares? Alas (ſayth he) it is no time now to play, it is no time to be ſecure, when ſo weightie a matter is in hande. So he bad the women that they ſhoulde not weepe for him, but for them ſelues and for their children, and he adioyneth the cauſe: For if they doe theſe things to a greene tree, what ſhal be done to the drie? as if he ſayd: learne what ye obtayne by my paſſion, and howſoeuer thinges fall out, yet this is true and knowne among you, that the whelpe is ſometime ſmitten, that the banddogge or maſtiue may be terrified. So alſo the Prophet hath ſpoken: All kinreds of the earth ſhall

waile before him. He sayd not, they shall bewaile him, but, they shal waile before him. Moreouer they were sore afraid, of whom it is before spoken, so that they said vnto the Apostles Act. 2 Men and brethren, what shall we doe?

Eighthly, that this affection may be wrought in vs, the Lordes passion is very diligently to be considered of and meditated vpon, forasmuch as the most certaine profite thereof doth much consist herein, that a man may come to the knowledge of him selfe, and tremble and be troubled before him selfe whereunto he that doth not come, hath not yet attained vnto the due profite of the Lordes passion. For the passion of Christ hath this proper and naturall vertue, to make a man like vnto him, that euen as he was grieuously tormented both in body and mind for our sinnes: so we also to imitat him must be afflicted in the knowledge of our sinnes. Howbeit the matter is not here done in many words, but in depe cogitation and earnest weping of sinnes. Take a similitude: as thou hast great cause to feare and tremble, if, when some malefactor is condemned, for that he hath killed the sonne of the King or Prince, thou in the meane season, singing and playing securely as being innocent, art terribly apprehended and conuicted, that thou didest suborne the homicide: So thou oughtest to become much more fearefull when thou doest reuolue in thy minde the passion of Christ. For albeit the wicked Iewes be nowe iudged of God and dispersed, yet were they ministers of thy transgressions, if thou for a certainty art he, which with thy sinnes hast crucified and slayne the sonne of God, as it hath bene sayd.

By consideration of Christs passion we ought to come to the knowledge of our selues

A similitude.

Ninethly, he that feeleth him selfe so hardned and dull, that the passion of Christ doth not terrifie him, neither bring him vnto the knowledge of him selfe, is in an ill and lamentable case: for Christes passion is not effectuall in him. But nowe it is a hard thing for thee to be occupied in these thinges, and earnestly bent to the meditation of them: wherefore thou shalt pray God that he will mollifie thy hart, and giue thee grace profitablie to meditate vpon the passion of Christ, because it can not in any wise be, that the passion of Christ should be inwardly and rightly thought vpon and considered of vs, vnlesse God inspire it into our hartes. Yea, neither this meditation nor any other doctrine is therefore set forth vnto thee, that thou shouldest boldly rushe vpon it of thy selfe to fulfill it, but that thou shouldest first aske and desire the

What we must do that our meditation vpon Christes passion may be frutefull.

grace

grace of God, that thou mayst fulfill it, not by thine own strength, but by Gods grace. For hereof it commeth, that they of whom it is before spoken, do not meditate on the passion of Christ aright, because they desire not helpe of God thereunto, but rather trusting vnto their owne strength, and following their owne inuention, meditate vpon it altogither after the fashion of men, and after a slender and vnfruitefull maner.

Tenthly, if one should through the grace of God meditate rightly vpon the passion of Christ, by the space of one day, or of one hower, yea or the space of a quarter of an hower, we would faithfully pronounce of him, that he hath done better, then if he had pined him self with fasting the space of a whole yeare, or had runne ouer the Psalter euery day. For this maner of meditation doth as it were chaunge a man, and almost regenerate him a new like vnto baptisme. Then in deede the Lordes passion doth his naturall, due and noble office, it killeth the olde Adam, it driueth away all pleasure, ioy and confidence, which may be had of creatures, euen as Christ was forsaken of all, yea euen of his father.

Eleuenthly, seeing that such a thing is not in our owne power, it commeth to passe that we doe often times aske it, and yet do not by and by obtaine it, notwithstanding we must not therefore despaire or cease. For that is sometimes giuē for which we haue not prayed, and that sometimes is not graunted for which we haue prayed, euen as it is the pleasure of God, and as he knoweth to be best for vs, for God will haue this gift to be free & without constraint.

We must not despaire or cease, though at the first we obtaine not that we pray for.

Twelfthly, when as a man thus knowing his sinne doth wholy tremble in him selfe, he must especially endeuour, that sinnes doe not still remaine in his conscience, otherwise meere desperation wil come thereupon, but he must shake them of and cast them vpon Christ and so vnburden his conscience. Therefore see again and againe that thou doe not that which peruerse men doe, which within the secrets of their hart doe vexe and disquiet them selues because of their sinnes, and striue with them, that by good workes or satisfactions, by farre going on pilgrimage, or else by pardons they may become safe, and may be made free from sinnes, which can not be. And (alas) such a false confidence in satisfactions and pardons hath preuailed very farre.

Moreouer, then thou doest cast thy sinnes from thee vppon

What it is to caſt our ſinnes vpon Chriſt. 1. *Pet.* 2. 24. 2. *Cor.* 5. 21.

Chriſt, when thou firmely beleueſt that he ſuffered & was wounded for thy ſinnes, and that he hath payd the ful ranſom and ſatisfaction for them, as Eſaias ſayth chap. 53. The Lord hath thrown vpon him all our ſinnes. And S. Peter ſayth: who his owne ſelfe bare our ſinnes in his body on the tree. S. Paule ſayth: He hath made him to be ſinne for vs, which knewe no ſinne, that we ſhould be made the righteouſnes of God in him. In theſe and ſuch like authorities thou muſt repoſe thy hope with all boldnes, and that ſo much the more, as thy conſcience doth more grieuouſly vexe and trouble thee. But if thou ſhalt not doe this, but preſumeſt that thou ſhalt be quiet by thy contrition and ſatisfaction, then thou ſhalt neuer come vnto quietnes, but at the laſt ſhalt fall euen into deſperation. For our ſinnes kept and medled within our conſcience, and ſet before the eyes of our hart, are farre ſtronger then we, and doe liue immortally. But when as we ſee them layd vpon Chriſt, and to be victoriouſly conquered of him by his reſurrection, and doe conſtantly beleue this, then they are dead and brought vnto nothing. And yet being layd vpon Chriſt, they muſt not remaine ſo: for they are ſwallowed vp in the triumphe of his reſurrection. So ſayth S. Paule: Chriſt was deliuered to death for our ſinnes, and is riſen againe for our iuſtification, that is, he hath taken vpon him our ſinnes in his paſſion, & hath thereby payed the raunſom for them, but by his reſurrection he iuſtifieth vs, and maketh vs free from all ſinne, if ſo be that we do beleue this.

What we muſt doe when we can not attaine vnto this faith, to beleue that Chriſt dyed for our ſinns and roſe again for our iuſtification.

If thou canſt not attaine vnto this faith, thou muſt as it is a litle before ſayd, reſort vnto God by prayer, foraſmuch as this gift is in the hand of God only, who beſtoweth it when & vpon whom it pleaſeth him. Thou mayſt alſo ſtirre vp thy ſelfe hereunto: firſt, not now conſidering the paſſion of Chriſt outwardly, (for that hath nowe fulfilled his function and hath terrified thee) but rather by pearſing inwardly and contemplating his moſt louing hart, with how great loue towards thee it is replenished, which brought him hereunto, that he did beare thy conſcience together with thy ſinnes with ſo great and painful difficultie. So thy hart ſhall waxe ſweete towards him, and the ſtrength and boldnes of thy faith ſhall be increaſed. Then hauing entred vnto the hart of Chriſt, aſcend higher euen vnto the heart of God, and conſider that the loue of Chriſt could not haue bene ſhewed vnto thee, except

cept the will of God by his eternall loue had ſo appointed, wherunto Chriſt by his loue toward thee did obey. There thou ſhalt finde a diuine hart, a good hart, a fatherly hart, and (as Chriſt ſayth) thou ſhalt be drawne vnto the father by Chriſt. There thou ſhalt vnderſtand this ſaying of Chriſt: So God loued the world that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whoſoeuer beleueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life. For this is to know God aright, when he is vnderſtood of vs, not vnder the name of power or wiſedom (which is a terrour vnto vs) but vnder the name of goodnes and loue. Then faith and confidence may ſtand conſtantly, and man him ſelfe is as it were regenerate a new in God.

When thy hart is thus eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, ſo that thou art now become an enemie of ſinne, and that by loue and not through feare of punishment, then afterward the paſſion of Chriſt ought to be an example vnto thee in thy whole life, and is now to be conſidered of in thy mind after a farre other maner then before. For hitherto we haue conſidered it as an outward thing which ſhould worke in vs, but now we will wey it ſo, that ſome thing is to be done of vs alſo. For examples ſake: when griefe or infirmitie doth moleſt thee, thinke how light theſe are being compared to the crowne of thornes and the nayles of Chriſt. When thou muſt either doe or leaue of that which is grieuous vnto thee to doe or leaue of, thinke how Chriſt was taken and bound, and led vp and downe. When pride tempteth thee, conſider with thy ſelfe howe thy Lord was mocked, and reputed among theeues. When luſt and pleaſure pricke thee, thinke with how great ſharpenes the tender fleſh of Chriſt was torne with whipps, & pearſed through. When anger, enuy, deſire of reuenge moue thee, thinke with how great teares and cryes Chriſt did pray euen for his enemies, toward whom he might more iuſtly haue ſhewed him ſelfe ſharpe and rigorous. When ſadnes or any aduerſitie whatſoeuer either corporall or ſpirituall troubleth thee, ſtrengthen thy hart, & ſay: well, why ſhould not I alſo ſuffer a litle ſorrowfulnes, when as my Lord did ſweat blood in the garden for anguiſh & heauines. Surely he were a ſluggiſh and an ignominious ſeruaunt, who, his maiſter lying at the point of death, would be held from him with a ſoft and eaſie bed.

Iohn 3.16.

In the meditation of Chriſtes paſſion we may finde remedy againſt griefe, pride, luſt, anger, enuy, ſorow, trouble, &c.

Lo, thus a man may find ſtrength & remedie in Chriſt againſt

all crimes and offences. This is truely in deede to meditate vpon the passion of Christ: these are the frutes of the Lordes passion, in which he that doth after this sort exercise him selfe, doth surely without comparison better then if he heard all passions or all superstitious masses. Such also are called true Christians, which doe so represent the life and name of Christ in their life, as S. Paule sayth: They that are Christes, haue crucified the flesh with the affections and lustes with Christ. For the passion of Christ is not to be handled in wordes and outward shewe, but in deede and veritie. So S. Paule admonisheth vs: Consider him that endured such speaking against of sinners, lest ye should be wearied and fainte in your mindes. And S. Peter sayth: Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for vs in the flesh, arme your selues likewise with the same minde. But such meditation is now growen out of vse and begon to waxe rare, wherewith notwithstanding the Epistles of Peter and Paule are most abundantly replenished.

Gal.5.24.

Heb.12.3.

1.Pet.4.1.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE FRVTE AND VERTVE OF CHRIST HIS RESVRRECTION.

It is not enough to know the historie of Christs passion and resurrection, but the vse and frute of them must be preached and knowen.

WE haue heard in the treatise of the Lordes passion, that it is not sufficient to knowe onely the bare historie thereof. After the same manner it is not enough here to know, how and when Christ rose againe, but both the vse and the profit as well of his passion as of his resurrection must be preached and knowne, to wit, what Christ obtained for vs by them. For where the onely deede of the historie is preached, it is a friuolous preaching and without all frute, which both Satan and the wicked doe as well know, reade, and vnderstand, as we doe. But when as the vse of them

them is preached, and whereunto they profit, that in deede is a fruitefull and wholsom Sermon, and full of sweete consolation. Wherefore Christ himselfe hath declared the vse and profite of his passion and resurrection, when he thus talked with the women Matth. 28: Be not afrayed: Goe and tell my brethren that they goe into Galile, and there shal they see me. And this is the first word, which they heare of Christ after his resurrection from the dead, whereby he confirmeth all his sayinges, also all his benefits shewed vnto them before, to wit that they should come vnto vs also that should beleue in him, and pertaine onely to the beleuers, for that here he calleth not onely the Apostles his brethren, but also all them which beleue in him, although they doe not see him visibly as the Apostles did. He doth not differre vntill we pray vnto him and call vppon him, that we may be made his brethren. Let any of vs now come forth, and boast of his merit or of the strength, whereby he is able to merit any thing. What had the Apostles merited? Peter denied Christ thrise. All the rest of the Disciples did flie away from him, they did persever and stand by him, euen as the hare tarieth with her young ones, he might haue called them runawayes, and forsakers of their standing in the middest of their conflict, yea traitors and wicked men, rather then brethren. Wherefore of meere grace and mercy this worde was brought vnto them of the Matrones, which the Apostles themselues did then well perceaue, and we also doe throughlie feele, when we are set in the middes of sinnes, and are ouercome of damnation.

The Apostles merited nothing at all, that Christ should call them his brethren.

This word therefore is ful of all consolation and comfort, that Christ careth for such wretched men as we are, yea and that he doth call vs his brethren. If so be that Christ be our brother, surely I would fayne know what good thing we shall want. As therfore the case standeth among carnal brethren, so doth it stand here. They that are germane brethren by consanguinitie, doe vse goodes common among themselues, hauing the same father, the same inheritance, otherwise they were not brethren. So we also possesse common good thinges with Christ, enioying the same father, the same inheritance, which inheritance is not diminished by parting it, as worldly inheritances are, but is alwayes made more abundant: for it is a spiritual inheritance. A corporall inheritance, when it is distributed into diuers parts, is made smal-

ler, but in this portion of the ſpirite, the caſe is ſuch, that he that hath gotten part thereof hath obtained the whole. What is therefore the inheritance of Chriſt? In his power are life and death, ſinne and grace, and whatſoeuer is contained in heauen and in earth, his are eternall veritie, ſtrength, wiſedom, righteouſnes. All power is giuen vnto him, he hath rule ouer all thinges, euer hunger and thirſt, proſperitie and aduerſitie, &c. he reigneth ouer all thinges that can be thought, whether they be in heauen or in earth, ſpirituall or corporall, and that I may ſpeake at once: all thinges are in his power, as well eternall thinges as temporall. Nowe if I ſhall cleaue vnto him by faith, I ſhall be made partaker of all his good thinges, and ſhall not obtayne a parte of the inheritance onely, but I ſhall poſſeſſe euen with him euerlaſting wiſedom, eternall ſtrength. My bellie ſhall not be grieued with hunger, ſinnes ſhall not oppreſſe me, neither ſhall I be afraid of the face of death, neither ſhall I dread the ſight of Satan, neither ſhal I want the plenty of any thing that is good, euen as he wanteth it not. Hereby nowe we may eaſily vnderſtande the ſayinges vttered commonly in the Prophets & eſpecially in the Pſalmes, as where Dauid ſayth Pſal. 34: The Lions doe lacke and ſuffer hunger, but they that feare the Lorde ſhall want no manner of thing that is good: and where he ſayeth in an other place: The Lord knoweth the waies of the righteous, and their inheritance ſhall endure for euer. They ſhall not be confounded in the perilous time, and in the dayes of dearth they ſhall haue enough. And againe: I haue bene young and now am old, and yet ſaw I neuer the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeede begging bread. All which thinges Chriſt bringeth with him, for that we are, and are called his brethren, not becauſe of any merit but of meere grace. If we would print theſe things in our hart, ỳ we might throughly feele them, it ſhoulde goe well with vs, but they goe in at one eare and out at an other. This is that wherof S. Paule ſo greatly glorieth Rom. 8. As many as are led by the ſpirit of God, they are the ſonnes of God. For ye haue not receaued the ſpirite of bondage to feare againe: but ye haue receaued the ſpirite of adoption, whereby we crie Abba, Father: The ſame ſpirite beareth witnes with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God: if we be children, we are alſo heires, euen the heires of God, and heires annexed with Chriſt, if ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that

The inheritance of Chriſt.

What they enioy that cleaue to Chriſt by faith.

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we may also be glorified with him.

Moreouer this title ascendeth so high, that mans mind is not able to comprehend it. For vnles the spirite the comforter did impart this grace vnto vs, no man should euer be able to say: Christ is my brother. For reason can not be bold so to say, albeit one repeate it in wordes very often, as the new spirites do. It is a higher thing then that it can be so spoken, for except the hart feele it, as it is requisite it should, it shall be nothing but onely flatterie. But if thou feele it inwardly in thy hart, it will be so excellent a thing vnto thee, that thou wilt much rather say nothing of it, then speake and talke of it, yea by reason of the greatnes of so good a thing, thou wilt perhaps doubt as yet and be in an vncertaintie whether it be so or not. They which onely cry out thus: Christ is my brother, are fanatical spirits, who vainly pronounce words without any frute. The case standeth farre otherwise and farre more marueilously with a true Christian, so that he is thereby enforced to be amased, neither dareth he either say or confesse any thing sufficiently thereof. Wherefore we must endeuour, that we doe not heare this onely with fleshly eares, but that we feele it in our hart, for then we will not be so rash, but we shall be forthwith caried into an admiration thereof. True and sincere Christians enter into the viewing and feare of them selues, thinking thus: O wretched and defiled creature, which am drowned in sinnes, am I now made worthy, that the sonne of God should be my brother? how doe I miserable wretch attaine to such a thing? Thus he is by and by astonied, and doth not well vnderstand the thing. But a great studie and endeuour surely is required, that a man may beleue this, yea if it were felt, as it ought in very deed, a man should forthwith dye thereupon. For he can not vnderstand it according to his flesh and blood, and the hart of man in this life is more narrow & straight, then that it is able to comprehēd so great things. But in death, when the hart shall be stretched out, then I say we shall trie what we haue heard by the word.

In the Gospel of Iohn chap. 20. Christ doth farre more plainly declare vnto Marie Magdalen this vse and frute both of his death and also of his resurrection, when he sayth: Goe vnto my brethren and tell them: I ascend vnto my father and your father, vnto my God and your God, this is one of the most comfortable places whereof we may glory and boast: As though Christ

should say: Marie, get thee hence and declare vnto my Disciples which did flie from me, which haue throughly deserued punishment and eternall condemnation, that this resurrection of myne is for their good, that is, that I haue by my resurrection brought the matter to that passe, that my father is their father, & my God is their God. They are but a fewe and very short words in deede but they containe great matter in them, namely, that we haue as great hope & confidence reposed in God, as his owne sonne him selfe. Who can comprehend such exceeding ioye, I will not say, utter it? that a wretched and defiled sinner may be bold to call God his father & his God euen as Christ him selfe. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrewes chap. 2. did well remember the wordes of the Psalme, and weied with him selfe how it speaketh of Christ, who, as he sayth, is not ashamed to call the beleuers, brethren, saying: I will declare thy name vnto my brethren, in the middest of the Church or congregation will I sing prayses to thee.

If any worldly Prince or noble man should humble him selfe so low, that he would say to a theefe or robber, or to one that is infected with the french pockes: thou art my brother, it would be a certaine notable thing which euery one would maruell at. But whereas this king which sitteth in glory at the right hand of his father, sayth of some poore man: this is my brother, that no man layeth vp in the bosome of his breast, neither doth any man consider of it in his mind, wherein notwithstanding our chiefe comfort and confidence consisteth against sinne, death, the deuils, hell, the law, and against all sinister successe of things as well of the body as of the minde. Moreouer, forasmuch as we are flesh and blood, and therefore subiect to all kindes of aduersitie, it followeth, that the case should stand so also with our brother, otherwise he should not be like vnto vs in all thinges. Wherefore, that he might be made conformable and like vnto vs, he tasted and had experience of all things euen as we haue, sinne onely excepted, that he might be our true brother, and exhibite him selfe openly vnto vs. Which the Epistle to the Hebrewes doth liuely set forth chap. 2. where it saith: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh & blood, he also him selfe likewise tooke part with them, that he might destroy through death, him that had the power of death, that is, the deuil, & that he might deliuer all the, which for feare

Christ like vnto vs in all things except sinne

of

of death were all their life time ſubiect to bondage. For he toke not on him the Angells nature, but he tooke on him the ſeede of Abraham. Wherfore in al things it behoued him, to be made like vnto his brethren, that he might be merciful, and a faithfull hie Prieſt in things concerning God, that he might make reconciliation for the ſinnes of the people. For in that he ſuffered and was tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted. **The profit, vſe and frute of the Lords paſſion & reſurrection S. Paule hath gathered very briefly and as it were into one ſhort ſumme,** when he ſayeth Rom. 4: Chriſt was deliuered to death for our ſinnes, and is riſen againe for our iuſtification. **Whereof thus much at this time ſhall ſuffiſe.**

The frute of Chriſts paſſion and reſurrection.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE GOOD SHEPEHEARD.

Iohn 10.

Verſe 11. IEſus ſayde vnto the Iewes: I am that good ſhepeheard: that good ſhepheard giueth his life for his ſheepe.

12. But an hyreling, & he which is not the ſhepeheard, neither the ſheepe are his owne, ſeeth the woulfe comming, and leaueth the ſheepe, and flieth, and the woulfe catcheth them, and ſcattereth the ſheepe.

13. So the hyerling fleeth, becauſe he is an hyerling, and careth not for the ſheepe.

14. I am that good shepeheard, & know mine, and am knowne of mine.

15. As the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father: and I lay downe my life for my sheepe.

16. Other sheepe I haue also which are not of this folde: them also must I bring, and they shall heare my voice, and there shall be one sheepefold, and one shepeheard.

THis text is full of consolation, which in a goodly parable setteth forth Christ our Lorde, and teacheth what maner of person he is, what be his workes, & of what affection he is toward men. Neuertheless it can not be vnderstood, but by comparing togither light and darkenes, day and night, that is, a good & an euil shepeheard, as the Lord also doth in this place.

The preaching of the law.

Ye haue nowe oftentimes heard that God hath instituted and ordained in the world two maner of preachinges: One is, when the word of God is preached, which sayth Exod. 20: Thou shalt haue none other gods before me. Also: Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adulterie, Thou shalt not steale, & doth also threaten, that he which doth not keepe those preceptes shall dye. But that preaching doth iustifie no man. For although a man be thereby compelled to shew him selfe godly outwardly before men, notwithstanding inwardly his hart is offended at the lawe, and had leuer there were no lawe.

The preaching of the Gospell.

The other ministerie of the word is the Gospel, which sheweth where that is to be receaued, which the lawe requireth, it neither vrgeth nor threatneth, but allureth men gentlely, it sayeth not: doe this or that, but it sayth thus: Goe too, I will shew where thou mayest receaue and take, whereby thou mayst become righteous: Behold, here is Iesus Christ, he will giue it thee. Wherefore these two disagree one with an other, as much as to receaue and giue, to exact and reward. And this difference is to be well vnderstood and marked.

To whom the law must be preached.

To hardened and vntractable men, which feele not the Gospell, the lawe is to be preached, and they are so long to be vrged, till they beginne to be mollified and humbled, and doe acknowledge their disease, which when it is done, there is then place to begin

to

to preach the Gospell. These two sortes of preachinges were instituted and ordained of God, besides these there are other which were not ordayned of God, but are traditions inuented by men, ordained of the Pope and his prelats, wherewith they haue peruerted the Gospell. These are not worthie to be called either shepeheards or hirelings, but they are those which Christ calleth theeues, robbers and wolues. For if we will rule and guide men rightly and well, that must needes be done by the worde of God: wherby if it be not done, we surely labour in vaine. Furthermore Christ intreateth here of that seconde ministerie of the word, and describeth of what sorte it is: he maketh him selfe the chiefe, yea the onely shepeheard, for that which he doth not feede, doth surely remaine vnfed.

Ye haue heard that our Lorde Iesus Christ after his passion and death was raysed from the dead, is entred into, and placed in immortalitie, not that he might sit idle in heauen, and reioyce with him selfe, but that he might receaue a kingdom, might execute the function of a gouernour and king, of whom all the Prophets, yea & the whole Scripture doe speake very much. Wherfore he is to be acknowledged to be vnto vs continually a present gouernour and ruler, neither must we thinke that he is idle in heauen, but that he doth from aboue both fill and gouerne all thinges as Paule sayeth Ephes. 4. who hath an especiall care of his kingdome, which is the Christian faith, hereuppon it must needes be, that his kingdom doe florish amonge vs here in earth. Of this kingdom we haue elsewhere sayd, that it is so ordeyned, that we all encrease euery day and become purer, and that it is not gouerned at all by any force or power, but by outward preaching alone, that is, by the Gospell. And this Gospell commeth not from man, but Iesus Christ him selfe brought it, and afterward put it into the hartes of the Apostles, and their successors, that they might comprehend it, and into their mouthes that they might speake and publish it. Hereby is his kingdome gouerned, wherein he so reigneth, that all the power thereof consisteth in the word of God. Now whosoeuer shall heare and beleue this, do pertayne to this kingdome. Moreouer this worde is afterward made so effectuall, that it giueth all thinges which are necessarie to man, & bringeth a certaine aboundance of all good things which may be had. For it is the power of God which is able to saue e-

The kingdō of Christ increaseth, not by force and power but by preaching of the Gospell.

The force & efficacie of the word of God.

uery one that beleueth, as Paule witnesseth Rom. 1: When thou beleuest that Christ died for thee, to deliuer thee from all euill, & so cleauest vnto the worde, it is sure and certaine that no creature is able to ouerthrow thee. For as none is able to ouerthrow the word, so none is able to hurt thee, when thou sticket vnto it. By the word therefore thou doest ouercome sinne, death, Satan, hell, and thither thou must resort and flie, where the word is, that is, to eternall peace, ioy, and life, and briefly, thou shalt be made partaker of all such good things as are promised in ỳ word. Wherfore the gouernment of this kingdom is maruelous: the word is published & preached through the whole world, but the power thereof is very secret, neither doth any man marke that it is so effectual, & that it so much profiteth them that beleue: howbeit it must be felt and tasted in the hart. We therefore of the ministerie are able to performe no more, then that we are the mouth of our Lorde Christ, & the instrument whereby he openly preacheth the word. For he suffereth the word to be published abroad, that euerie one may heare it. But faith maketh that it is felt inwardly in ỳ hart, yea and it is the secret worke of Christ, whensoeuer any knoweth that it is his duety, and is also willing to doe according to his diuine will and good pleasure.

But that this may be the better perceiued, we will now intreat of our text, wherein Christ first saith: I am the good shepeheard. And what is a good shepeheard? A good shepeheard, saith Christ, giueth his life for his sheepe. And I leaue my life for my sheepe. Here the Lord declareth what his kingdom is, bringing a goodly parable of the sheepe. Ye knowe that it is a beast of all liuing creatures most foolish and most simple, so that thereuppon it is commonly spoken as a prouerbe, if we haue to speake of a simple one: He is a sheepe. Neuertheless it is of that nature more then other liuing creatures, that it quickely knoweth the voyce of his shepeheard, neither followeth it any beside his owne shepeheard, being alwaies of that qualitie that it cleaueth to him, and seeketh for helpe of him alone, being not able to helpe it selfe, neither to feede it selfe, neither to heale it selfe, nor keepe it selfe from the wolues, but doth wholy consist in the helpe of an other. Christ therefore bringeth the qualitie and nature of the sheepe in maner of a parable, and transformeth him selfe into a sheepeheard, whereby he doth verie well shewe, what his kingdome is, and

wherein

wherein it consisteth, and his meaning is this: My kingdom is nothing els, but that I may feede sheepe, that is, miserable, needy, and wretched men in the earth, which doe well perceiue and feele, that they haue no helpe or counsell any other where, but in me alone.

But that we may declare this more plainely, we will adde hereunto a place out of Ezechiel chap. 34. which speaketh of euill shepeheards that doe contrary vnto Christ, & sayth: Ought not the flockes suffer them selues to be fed of the shepeheards? Why therefore doe you feede your selues? Ye haue eaten the milke of the sheepe, ye haue clothed your selues with the woll, the best fed ye haue slayne, but my flocke haue ye not fed. The weake haue ye not strengthned, the sicke haue ye not healed, the broken haue ye not bound together, the driuen away haue ye not brought againe, the lost haue ye not sought, but with force and crueltie haue ye ruled them. And now my sheepe are scattered, for that they are destitute of shepeheards, yea all the beastes of the field deuoure them, and they are dispersed ouer all mountaines, and ouer the whole earth. That which he here sayth is well to be marked: his very meaning in this place is, that he will haue the weake, sicke, broken, abiects, and lost, to be strengthned, healed, cured, sought, not spoyled and destroyed. These thinges ye ought to doe, sayth he to the shepeheards, but ye haue done none of them. Wherefore I my selfe (as he afterward sayth) will deale thus with my sheepe: That which is lost will I seeke againe, that which is driuen away will I bringe againe, and to that which is not well will I giue a remedie and heale it. Here thou seest that the kingdome of Christ is such as hath to doe with those that be weake, diseased and broken, & hath care of them to helpe them. The preaching whereof in deede is very full of comfort, but this is wanting in vs, that we doe not throughly feele our miserie and weakenes, which if we felt, we would forthwith runne vnto him. But how did those shepeheards behaue them selues? They ruled in rigour and straightly exacted obedience of the lawe. Moreouer, they added their owne traditions, as they doe also at this daye, which if they be not kept, they cry out, and condemne him that transgresseth them, so that they doe nothing else, but vrge more and more and commaund their owne inuentions. But this is not to feede well or to gouerne

Euill shepeheards how they behaue them selues and gouerne their flocke.

a ſoule, as Chriſt ſayth, who him ſelf is not ſuch a ſhepeheard, for by ſuch maner of feeding none is holpen, but the ſheepe are vtterly loſt as we ſhall vnderſtand.

Weake conſciences how they muſt be handled.

Now we will handle the place of the Prophet in order. Firſt he ſayth that the weake ſheepe are to be ſtrengthned, that is, the conſciences which are weake in faith, and haue a ſorrowfull ſpirite, & are of a faint courage, are not to be enforced, that it ſhould be ſayd vnto them: This thou muſt doe, thou muſt be ſtrong. For if thou be ſo weake, thou art ordayned to eternall puniſhment: This is not to ſtrengthen the weake. Thus ſayth Paule *Rom. 14.* Him that is weake in the faith receiue vnto you, and entangle not conſciences. And by & by after he addeth *Rom. 15:* We which are ſtronge ought to beare the infirmities of the weake. Wherfore they are not to be ſeuerely compelled, but to be comforted, that although they be weake, they may not therefore deſpeire, for afterwards they ſhall become ſtronger. Eſaias the Prophet did thus foreſpeake of Chriſt chap. 42: A bruſed reede ſhall he not breake, and the ſmoking flax ſhal he not quenche. The bruſed reede ſignifieth miſerable, weake, and bruſed conſciences, which are eaſily ſo ſhaken, that they tremble, and loſe hope and truſt in God. With theſe God doth not forthwith deale rigorouſly and after a violent maner, but he dealeth gently with them, leſt he breake them. Moreouer the ſmoking flax, which doth as yet burne a litle, & nouriſheth more ſmoke then fire, are the ſame conſciences, which ought not againe to deſpeire, for he will not vterly extinguiſh them, but alwayes kindle them, and more and more ſtrengthen them. Which truely to him that knoweth it, is a great comfort. Wherefore he which doth not gently handle weake conſciences after this ſort, doth not without doubt execute the office of a true ſhepeheard.

Afterward the Prophet ſayth: That which was diſeaſed, ye ought to haue ſuccoured. Who are thoſe diſeaſed ones? They which in their maner of liuing, and in their outward works haue certaine diſeaſes, and vices. The firſt pertaineth to the conſcience when as it is weake: the other to the maners or conditions of life, when as any being caried with a wilfull mind and wayward braine, doth offend here and there, to wit, by wrath & other fooliſh doings, as euen the Apoſtles fel ſometimes grieuouſly. Such as are ſo vitious in the ſight of men, that they are an offence to o-

thers.

thers, and are iudged obſtinate and wayward, God will not haue to be reiected and deſpeired of. For his kingdom is not ordered after ſuch a maner, that the ſtronge and whole onely ſhoulde liue therein (which pertaineth to the life to come) but Chriſt is therefore ſet in it, that he may haue a care of ſuch & helpe them. Wherfore albeit we are ſo weake and ſicke, notwithſtãding we muſt not ſo deſpeire, that we ſhould ſay, that we are not in the kingdom of Chriſt, but the more we feele our diſeaſe, ſo much the more we muſt come vnto him, for he therefore is at hande that he may remedie and heale vs. Nowe if thou be weake and oppreſſed with faintnes, feeling great affliction, hereby thou haſt gotten a greater occaſion to goe vnto him, & to ſay on this maner: Moſt ſweete Chriſt, I therefore come vnto thee becauſe I am a ſinner, that thou maiſt helpe and iuſtifie me: yea verie neceſſitie doth compell thee hereunto. For the greater thy diſeaſe is, ſo much more nedefull is it for thee to be healed. And Chriſt him ſelfe requireth the ſame of vs, and doth allure vs to come vnto him boldly and cherefully. But others which are not ſuch ſhepeheards, doe thinke that they ſhall make men righteous, if they exact much of them and vrge them much, whereby they onely make that which is euill worſe as we ſee it to be done at this day, whereas it is come to that diſorder, that all thinges are moſt miſerablie brought out of courſe, as in this place the Prophet ſayth.

The more we feele our ſelues diſeaſed, the greater cauſe we haue to flie vnto Chriſt.

The broken haue ye not bound together. To be broken is, as when ones legge is broken, or a wounde ſome where elſe giuen him. That is, when as a Chriſtian is not onely weake and diſeaſed, that he ſtumbleth ſometime, but alſo runneth into ſo great tentations, that he breaketh ſome parte, and ſo is brought to that paſſe, that he falleth and denieth the Goſpell, after the maner of Peter, who did forſweare Chriſt. Now if any ſhould ſo ſtumble, that he ſhould be compelled to goe backe, & be vtterly caſt downe in minde, neuertheleſſe we muſt not as yet caſt him of, as though he did neuer any more pertaine to the kingdom of Chriſt: for we muſt leaue Chriſtes property to him ſelfe, that his kingdom may remayne vnto him ſelfe meere grace and mercie, whoſe deſire is to helpe them onely, which are grieued with their calamitie and miſerie, and doe greatly deſire to be deliuered from it. That his kingdom may altogether abound with comfort, and he him ſelfe be the comfortable and gentle ſhepeheard, which prouoketh and

They which fall ſo grieuouſly that they euen deny the Goſpel, muſt not be vtterly diſpaired of.

allureth euery one to come vnto him. And all this is done by the Goſpell, whereby the weake are to be ſtrengthened, the ſicke to be healed. For it is ſuch a word as is fit for all diſtres of conſciences, giuing aboundant comfort to all, that none diſpaire although he be a great ſinner. Chriſt therefore alone is ỳ good ſhepeheard, which healeth all ſorts of diſeaſes, and helpeth them that are fallen: which he that doth not, is not a ſhepeheard.

The Prophet thus goeth forward: That which was driuen away, ye haue not brought againe. What is that that is driuen away? The deſpiſed ſoule, which is ſo ſcorned and contemned, that it is thought to be done in vaine, whatſoeuer Chriſtian doctrine is beſtowed vpon it. Notwithſtanding Chriſt doth not yet ſuffer, that it ſhould be dealt roughly with. His kingdom is not compaſſed with ſo ſtraight boundes, that only the ſtrong, whole and perfect doe floriſh therein, for this pertayneth to the heauenly life to come, now in this kingdom only grace & ſweetnes muſt abound. As God promiſed to the children of Iſraell Exod. 3. that that appointed land of Canaan ſhould flow only with milke & hony, euen as Paule 1. Cor. 12. affirmeth, that vppon thoſe members of the body, which we thinke more vnhoneſt, we put more honeſtie on.

They which ſeeme euen paſt hope muſt not be quite caſt of.

He concludeth: The loſt haue ye not ſought. That is loſt which ſeemeth to be condemned, of the returne whereof there is ſcarce any hope. Of which ſort in the Goſpell were Publicans & harlotes, and at this day they, who haue not ſo much as a ſparke of godlines, but are vntractable and vnruly. Neither are they notwithſtanding to be left, but all meanes are to be aſſayed that at the laſt they may be reclaimed and brought againe into the right way. Which S. Paule eftſoones did, as when he deliuered two of this ſort vnto Satan, 1. Tim. 1. I haue deliuered them vnto Satan that they might learne not to blaſpheme. And 1. Cor. 5. I haue determined, ſayth he, to deliuer them to Satan for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirite may be ſaued in the day of the Lorde Ieſus. Them he caſt of as condemned, and yet notwithſtanding did not deſpeire of them. Chriſt therefore is ſo to be preached, that he reiecteth no mã although he be weake, but that he willingly receaueth, comforteth and ſtrengtheneth euerie man, ſo that he alwayes appeareth to be the good ſheepeheard. Hereupon it commeth to paſſe, that men willinglie reſorte vnto him, and that it is no neede any more to compell them. The Goſpell

ſpell ſo allureth, and maketh them willing, that they come with a certaine loue and pleaſure, and with all boldnes. Whereupon a deſire and loue vnto Chriſt is increaſed in them, ſo that they doe any thing willingly, who before were to be vrged and compelled. If we be conſtrained, we doe grudgingly & vnwillingly, which God plainly abhorreth. But when as I ſhall perceiue that God dealeth ſo louingly and gently with me, my hart is as it were rauiſhed, ſo that I can not ſtay my ſelfe, but I muſt euen runne vnto him, leauing all other things, wherupon afterward all pleaſure and ioy enſueth vnto me.

The Goſpel allureth vs with loue & pleaſure to come vnto Chriſt.

Now conſider how great an euill it is, when one iudgeth an other. The kingdom of Chriſt, as we haue heard, is ordeined, that it healeth and iuſtifieth onely ſicke and miſerable conſciences, wherefore all they are farre deceiued, which haue regard only to the ſtronge and whole. It is great therefore and very effectuall knowledge whereby Chriſt is well knowne. It is grafted in vs by nature to be altogither euill and wicked, & yet notwithſtanding we would haue euery one to be honeſt, we earneſtly regard ſtronge Chriſtians, not looking therewithall to the ſicke and weake, thinking them not to be Chriſtians, if they are not ſtronge, and iudge others euill, if they be not altogither holy, when as we our ſelues in the meane ſeaſon exceede the reſt in naughtines. Now the cauſe hereof is our moſt corrupt nature, & our blind reaſon, which will meaſure the kingdom of God according to her owne opinion, whereby it thinketh that thoſe thinges are vncleane before God, which ſeeme vncleane vnto it ſelf, wherfore that opinion muſt be remoued out of our minde. For if thou haſt very much regard thereunto, thou ſhalt at the laſt come into the mind to thinke: alas, what ſhall become of me, if all Chriſtians muſt be ſuch, namely, ſtronge, whole, and godly? When ſhall I once attaine ſo farre? And ſo thou ſhalt bringe thy ſelfe into ſuch a perplexitie, that thou ſhalt hardly euer attayne vnto true comfort and ioy. Thou therefore muſt be ſo affected, that thou ſay: Moſt gracious Ieſu, although I finde my ſelfe altogether weake, diſeaſed, and in a wretched ſtate, yet I will not therefore caſt of all hope, but wil flie vnto thee, that thou mayſt ſuccour me, For thou onely art the ſhepeheard, & the good ſhepeheard, ſuch a one I am perſwaded that thou art, wherefore I will not deſpaire or be diſcouraged, although I come vnto thee beeing voyde of

Our corrupt nature and blind reaſon cauſe vs to erre & iudge amiſſe.

wozkes. We muſt therefoze beſtowe our diligence that we may wiſely and wel know Chriſt, that in his kingdom only the weake and diſeaſed are conuerſant, and that it is nothing elſe, but as it were an hoſpitall, wherein onely the ſicke and feeble doe lye, of whom a care muſt be had. But fewe men haue this knowledge, foz this wiſedom is exceeding hard to be attained vnto, ſo that it is wanting euen vnto them ſometime, who haue the Goſpell and the ſpirite, neither can any wiſedom come vnto men which is greater then it. Wherefoze, albeit men looke into the Scripture, which ſetteth foꝛth the kingdom of Chriſt, affirming it to be moſt pꝛecious, neuertheles they haue not ſuch a care what the wozdes ſignifie, neither doe they marke that true wiſedom is hidden therein, which excelleth our wiſedom by many degrees. Foz it is not Chriſtian wiſedom to haue to doe with men which are accounted wiſe, and ſkillfull, and to make mention, and talke of them, but to be occupied among the vnwiſe and them that lacke vnderſtanding, not that delight & pleaſure ſhould be taken thereof, but that they may come from ſinne and foolifhnes to righteouſnes and ſound vnderſtanding. Hereof it appeareth that Chriſtian wiſedom doth conſiſt in this, not that we looke aloft, & conſider thoſe things which are high and wiſe, & behold and ſee our ſelues in them as it were in a glaſſe, but that we looke to thoſe thinges that are below, and marke that which is humble and folifh. He which knoweth this, let him giue thanks vnto God. Foz by this knowledge he becommeth ſuch a one as is able to pꝛepare and apply him ſelfe to euery thing which is in the wozld. But ye ſhall finde many, yea euen among them that pꝛeach the Goſpell, which are not yet come thus farre. Hitherto we haue bene ſo enſtructed and accuſtomed, that none muſt come vnto Chriſt, befoze he be altogither cleane, thou muſt therefoze foꝛſake that opinion, that thou mayſt attaine to true vnderſtanding, that thou mayſt knowe Chriſt aright, how he is the true & good ſhepeheard, wherof we haue heard ſufficient.

Chriſtian wiſedom is occupied among the vnwiſe.

Nowe he compareth the good ſheepeheard with the cuill, oꝛ hireling, and ſayth: A good ſhepeheard giueth his life for the ſheepe: but an hireling, and he which is not the ſhepeheard, neither the ſheepe are his owne, ſeeth the wolfe comming, and leaueth the ſheepe, and the wolfe catcheth and ſcattereth the ſheepe. So the hireling flieth becauſe he is an hireling, and careth

reth not for the sheepe. It is true in deede that Christ is properly the onely shepeheard, euen as the name of Christ doth belong to him alone, yet he communicateth the same vnto vs, that we also may be called Christians. So although he be the onely shepeheard, yet he imparteth ẏ same nome to them that be of the ministerie. After the same maner *Matt. 23.* he forbiddeth, that we call no man father vpon the earth, forasmuch as there is one only our father, which is in heauen, notwithstanding Paule calleth himselfe the father of the Corinthians *1. Cor. 4.* when he sayth: In Christ Iesus I haue begotten you through the Gospel. So therfore it seemeth as though God alone would haue the name of a father, and in the meane season notwithstanding he graunteth the same name to men, that they also may be fathers, howbeit that they haue not of them selues but by Christ. Euen as we are called Christians, because we haue nothing of our selues, but for that all things are giuen vnto vs through Christ.

Moreouer, the hireling, sayth Christ, which is not the shepeheard, neither the sheepe are his owne, when he seeth the wolfe comming, leaueth the sheepe & flieth, &c. This surely is a hard saying, that they which truely preach the Gospel, and strengthen & heale the sheepe, neuertheles at the last doe suffer the sheepe to be caught and torne in peeces, and doe then flie away, when the sheepe haue neede of greatest helpe. As long as the wolues doe not appeare, they do their dutie carefully & diligẽtly, but as soone as they see the wolfe breake in, they forthwith leaue the sheepe. If they then haue fed them well, that they be fat, strong, & whole, they are the better liked of the wolues, for whome they haue fed them. But what is the hidden meaning of this parable? The meaning of Christ is this: In my kingdom (which consisteth in nothing else, but that the weake be strengthned, the sicke healed, the faynt harted encouraged) the holy crosse shall not be wanting. For when it is preached, that Christ onely, whose silly sheepe we are, hath care of vs, strengtheneth, healeth, and helpeth vs, & that our owne strength and our owne workes are of no importance at all, (whereby all workes of the world, and the diuerse sortes of worshipping God which it inuenteth are vtterly disallowed) the world can not abide such maner of preaching, so that it is a naturall propertie of the Gospell, to bring the crosse with it as vnseparably accompanying it, and he that will vnfainedly professe it

The hireling when the wolfe commeth leaueth the sheepe.

The crosse accompanieth the preaching of the Gospell.

before the world, must needes yeld him selfe to beare persecution. Forasmuch as the case standeth thus, it is not hard to perceiue how great difference there is betwene the true shepeheards and the hirelings. He that is an hireling preacheth the gospel as long as he is reported among men to be a learned, godly & holy man. But when as he is reproued or set vpon as an heretike and wicked fellow, or moued to make a recantation, then he either recanteth, or taketh him selfe to his feete, leauing the miserable sheepe alone without a shepeheard, then their case becommeth worse thē it was before. What doth it then auaile the sheepe if they were well fed before? If they were true shepeheards, they would spend their life before they would so leaue the sheepe to the iawes of the wolues, and would be ready alwayes to offer their necke to the axe for the Gospells sake. They therefore are neuer good shepeheards, which so preach the Gospell, that they may thereby get vnto them selues honour, riches, and profite, without all doubt they are hirelings, who seeke after their owne things euen in sound doctrine, yea and in the word of God. Wherefore they abide no longer, then while they may haue honour, praise & commoditie thereby, but as soone as the wolfe commeth, goe backe, deny the word, and get them selues away, leauing the sheepe, which very earnestly seeke for pasture and their shepeheard, who may keepe them from the iniurie of the wolues, but that good shepeheard can no where be found, who flyeth away euen at that tyme, when the sheepe haue most neede of a defender & strengthener.

The hireling how he behaueth him selfe.

What the true shepeheard doth.

The same shall happen to vs in time to come, when we shall once begin to be touched in deede. Then the Preachers will shut their mouthes, and prouide for their safetie by flying, and the sheepe shall be miserably dispersed, so that one shall be caried this way, an other that way. God graunt that some of them may stand valiantly in defense of the Gospell, and spend their blood, if the case so require in deliuering their sheepe. Thus Christ hath painted forth the hirelings in their colours, who thus sayth moreouer: I am that good shepeheard, and knowe myne, and am knowne of myne. These wordes doe containe much, I shoulde spend ouer much tyme, if I should handle them seuerally. He speaketh here of the peculiar dutie that belongeth to him selfe. I know my sheepe, sayth he, and they againe know me. Nowe the

ſumme is this: Chriſt knoweth vs to be his ſheepe, & we againe know him to be our ſhepeheard. He knoweth vs to be ſuch ſheepe as are weake and diſeaſed, which he doth not caſt of, but hath a care of them, and healeth them, although they be ſo diſeaſed, that all the worlde thinketh that they are not his ſheepe, & this in deede is the knowledge of the worlde. But Chriſt doth not ſo know thē, neither doth he greatly regard what maner of ones they be, but conſidereth whether they be ſheepe. They therefore are the true ſhepeheardes, who following Chriſt, doe ſo knowe their ſheepe, that they looke vnto the perſons, not to the diſeaſe.

My father knoweth me, ſayth Chriſt, but the worlde knoweth me not. When as therefore the howre ſhall come, that I ſhall dye an ignominious death vpon the croſſe, all with one voice will crie out: was this the ſonne of God? he muſt needes be a condemned man, and giuen vp vnto Satan, both in ſoule and alſo in body. So the worlde will conſider and knowe me. But my father will ſay in this ſorte: this is my wellbeloued ſonne, my King and Sauiour. He beholdeth not my affliction, my woundes, my croſſe & death, but he conſidereth my perſon, that is, my verie ſelfe. Wherefore if I were in the middeſt of hell, or in the iawes of Satan, yet I ſhould come out againe, for the father will not forſake me. Likewiſe I knowe my ſheepe, and they knowe me. They are certaine that I am a good ſhepeheard, they know me, therefore they come to me for ſuccour, and cleaue vnto me, neither doth it any thinge feare them, that they are ſubiect to manifolde infirmities and diſeaſes, they knowe verie well that I woulde haue ſuch maner of ſheepe to reſorte vnto me. Other ſheepe I haue alſo, which are not of this folde: them alſo muſt I bring and they ſhall heare my voyce, and there ſhall be one ſhepefold, & one ſhepeheard. Some haue ſo handled this place, that they affirme it ſhall be fulfilled before the latter day, when Antichriſt, Iohn, and Helias ſhall come. Which is flatly againſt the truth, and forged of Satan, that men might beleue, that the whole worlde ſhall at the laſt become Chriſtian. Which Satan therefore did that he might darken the ſounde doctrine, that we might neuer rightly vnderſtand it. Beware therefore of this deluſion. For by and by after the aſcenſion of Chriſt this was done and fulfilled, and is yet at this day fulfilled. As ſoone as the Goſpell was publiſhed, it was preached to the Iewes, and this people was the ſhepefold. Now

The world knoweth not Chriſt.

he sayth, that he hath certaine other sheepe also, which are not of this fold, which also he must gather together, wherby he sheweth, that the Gospell must be preached to the Gentiles that they also may beleue in Christ, that of the Iewes & Gentiles may be made one Church. Which he performed afterward by the Apostles, who preached the Gospell to the Gentiles, and brought them to the faith. So there is nowe one body, one Church, one faith, one hope, one loue, one baptisme, and so of the like, which continueth at this day, & shal so continue euen to the end of the world. Wherfore doe not so vnderstande it as though all men shall beleue in Christ, for the crosse must alwayes be borne of vs, forasmuch as the greatest parte is alwayes of that faction, which persecuteth Christians. The Gospell also must be continually preached, that alwayes some may be brought to Christianitie. And thus much for a compendious exposition of this text.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE LOST SHEEPE.

Luke 15.

Verse. 1. THen resorted vnto him all the Publicans and sinners to heare him.

2. Therefore the Pharises and Scribes murmured, saying: He receiueth sinners and eateth with them.

3. Then spake he this parable to them saying:

4. What man of you hauing an hundred sheepe, if he lose one of them, doth not leaue

leaue ninety and nyne in the wildernes, and go after that which is loſt, vntill he find it?

5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his ſhoulders with ioy.

6. And when he commeth home, he calleth togither his friendes and neighbours, ſaying vnto them: Reioyce with me: for I haue found my ſheepe which was loſt.

7. I ſay vnto you, that likewiſe ioy ſhall be in heauen for one ſinner that repenteth, more then fore nynety & nyne iuſt men, which nede none amendement of life.

What kind of doctrine this text cõtaineth.

IN this text, dearely beloued, euen that doctrine is contayned, which we are perſwaded, and glory to be our chiefe doctrine, and which by beſt right deſerueth to be called chriſtian doctrine, to witte, of grace and forgiuenes of ſinnes, ſet downe againſt the doctrine of the law, and of workes. But it is a very ſhamefull thing, that a Sermon ſo excellent, and repleniſhed with ſo great comfort and ioy, ſhould be heard of a man that is wicked & a contemner of the word of God. This is much more miſerable, that all thinke they haue ſo ſoone throughly learned it, to the knowledge whereof euery one will ſeeme to haue attayned, thinking that there is nothing in it, which he doth not perfectly vnderſtãd, and that there is no neede to ſpend any more ſtudy in learning it. Although it be not grieuous to God him ſelfe, neyther doth it yke or weary him, euery yeare repeating it, or rather euery day exerciſing it, as though he knew to preach nothing elſe, being vnſkilfull and ignorant of all other kind of doctrine. And we miſerable and wretched men doe ſo ſoone as we thinke attaine to the knowledge of the chiefeſt doctrine, that forthwith it is wearyſom and tedious vnto vs to repeate it, whereby all pleaſure and loue of the word of God dyeth and is extinguiſhed in vs.

But before I declare the article or chiefe poynt here taught, I thinke it good, that the beginning of this chapter be diligently conſidered, which S. Luke ſetteth in ſtede of a preface, and ſhew-

eth what gaue Christ cause to make this sermon, where he sayth: Then resorted vnto him all the Publicans and sinners to heare him. In which wordes he plainly signifieth with what men Christ kept company, namely with them, which in the sight of all men liued as it did not become them, and were openly called sinners and euill persons. Whereby it appeareth that the Pharisees seemed to haue sufficient cause to finde fault with Christ, for that he, which would be counted holy, did familiarly kepe company with such men. For they were commonly called Publicanes at that tyme, to whom the Romanes did let out some citie or custom, or some charge or ouersight in matters, for a certaine summe of money: as the Turke or Venetians doe now commit to some one some citie or office, for which a certaine summe of money is yearly to be payed, and whatsoeuer they shall scrape together by vniust exactions aboue this summe, that is their owne. So also the aforesayd Publicanes did, which so gathered those tributes and money wherewith they were charged, that they themselues also might haue some gayne thereby. And seeing that a summe of money to be payed for some citie or office was not small, they desirous to gaine thereby, did by all meanes deale vniustly, and vsed extortion in all thinges, in all places, and with all persons. For the Lordes and maisters held them so hardly and straightly, that they could not get much thereby, if they would deale rightly and iustly, and oppresse no man with vniust exactions. Whereupon they had a very euil report abroad, that they were most vniust exactors, and endued with smal honestie and integritie of life. Likewise the rest in generall were called sinners, which otherwise liued dishonestly and wretchedly, and were defiled with filthy offences, as with couetousnes, with whoredom, with surfeting and drunkennes, and such like. Such resort here vnto Christ, & come to heare him, when as before they had knowen him by report to be excellent and famous both in wordes and deedes.

With what kind of men Christ was conuersant.

Publicans what they were.

Howbeit it is certaine that in them although they seemed euen desperate, there was a sparke of vertue and honestie, in asmuch as they longed after Christ, both couetting to heare his doctrine, and also earnestly desiring to see the workes which he did, when before they knew him to be a good man, and heard no ill report either of his doctrine or workes, so that their life did farre differ from his. Neuertheles they are so wel disposed, that they are not

his

his enemies, neither refuse or flie his companie, but runne vnto him, not of any euill purpose or intent, but to see and heare some good thing, wherby they may amend their life. Contrariwise the Pharises and Scribes, which were counted most righteous and holy, are such poysonfull beastes, that they are not onely sore displeased at Christ whom they cã abide neither to see nor heare, but also they can not be content, that miserable sinners shoulde come vnto him, and heare him, whereby they being led by repentance might amend: Yea they do also beside this murmur, and reproue Christ, for that he admitted vnto him, & receaued Publicans and sinners, saying: Behold, is this that holy and famous man? Who will nowe say that he is of God, when as he hath societie with so wicked wretches? yea rather he is a drinker of wine & a glutton, as they say elsewhere, a frend to Publicans and sinners. *Luke.7.34.*

The malitious dealing of ỹ Scribes & Pharisees.

Such a report he is constrained to beare of the holy Pharises, not for that he giuing him selfe to gluttonie and surfetting, accustomed to feede excessiuely and followe riotous pleasure together with them, but onely because he admitted such into his company, and did not contemptuously reiect them. For in their opinion he shoulde haue gone with a sad and austere countenance, in base apparell, & haue remained seuered from the conuersation and company of men, and refused their fellowshippe, least that by familiar custome with them, he should be defiled, and should haue done as they were accustomed to do after ỹ maner of holy men. Of whom Esaye wryteth, that they studied for such puritie, that they did feare and suffer against their will euen the touching of a sinner. Which in deede plainly appeareth Luke 7. in the Pharise murmuring against Christ, because he suffred him selfe to be touched of the sinnefull woman. And it was they, that would alway be his maisters, and prescribe vnto him rules whereby to liue, and behaue him selfe in this life. Therefore in this place they murmur. for that he did not applie him selfe vnto them, neither did disdaine the companie and conuersation of such sinners according to their example.

Now Christ also is somwhat stout, plainly shewing here, that he can suffer ỹ maistership of none, but that he is altogether free & exempt from the commaundements of all, as commonly in the Gospels we see him to be at his owne wil & pleasure, who neuertheles otherwise was both gentler and also more seruiceable then

The stoutnes of Christ.

al the reſt. But when as they would deale with him by lawes, and be his maiſters, thē all frendſhip ceaſſed, for he did not otherwiſe leape backe, then the adamant layd vpon ꝑ anuyle & ſtriken, ſpeaking and doing onely the contrarie of that which they require of him, although they ſeeme to ſpeake euen rightly and well, alleaging thereunto alſo the worde of God. As they doe here, where they come and ſay: thou muſt doe thus, thou muſt follow the conuerſation of honeſt men, thou muſt flee the companie of wicked men. This truly is a ſubſtantiall doctrine, and confirmed by teſtimonie of the Scripture. For Moſes him ſelfe commaundeth the Iewes, to auoide euill men, & take away euill from among them. By this text they confirme their ſayings, & come with their Moſes, and would make Chriſt ſubiect to their lawes, and haue him ruled by them.

Chriſt compared to the Vnicorne.

But Chriſt neuertheleſſe will be at his owne libertie. And he is not vnlike the Vnicorne, which beaſt men deny that he can be taken aliue, with what kinde of hunting ſoeuer he be aſſailed. He ſuffereth him ſelfe to be wounded, to be ſtriken with darts, and to be ſlayne, to be taken he doth not ſuffer him ſelfe. No otherwiſe doth Chriſt alſo, who although he be ſet vpon by lawes, yet doth he not ſuffer them, but breaketh through as through a ſpiders web, rebuking them moſt ſharpely. As Matth. 12. where they found fault with his Diſciples, becauſe they had plucked ꝑ eares of corne on the Sabboth day, alleaging the commaundement of God that the Sabboth was to be kept holy, &c. he auoucheth the cleane contrary, tearing in ſunder ꝑ commaundement, affirming the contrarie both in wordes, and alſo by examples. Alſo Matth. 16, where he declareth to his Apoſtles that he ſhall ſuffer and be crucified, but Peter admoniſheth him to be of a good cheere, and ſetteth before him the precept of charitie, ſaying: Maiſter pitie thy ſelfe, there againe he doth earneſtly and ſharpely blame and rebuke his admoniſher, and ſayth: Get thee behinde me Sātan: thou vnderſtādeſt not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men.

Chriſt is impacient of lawes.

And in a ſumme, he is moſt impatient of all lawes wherewith they deale with him, he will be moſt free from all commaundementes, and acknowledged to be the Lord of them. He alway giueth ſuch aunſweres, as with which he repreſſeth the exactors, neither will he keepe any law as though he were compelled to do it.

it. Contrariwise, when he doth any thinge of his owne accorde, then no law is so litle or so light, whereunto he doth not willingly obey, and doth much more then it requireth. Wherefore there can none be founde more gentle and seruiceable then he, if he be vrged with the controlement or exaction of none. Moreouer he doth so farre humble him selfe, that he washeth the feete of Iudas which betraped him, according as he him selfe speaketh of him selfe: I came not to be serued, but to serue others, &c. which is manifest to them that consider his life, howe he walked abroade in Iudea, Samaria, Galile, and in the night slept on the ground, fasted fortie dayes, and tooke no rest at all, but pacientlie sustained so much labour, that they feared least he should be rauished in minde, or finallie bring some hurt to his bodie. He doth all thinges that he can, but that he refuseth to be compelled, and suffereth no lawes to be prescribed vnto him, which if any sette before him, he most stoutely resisteth and striueth against them. So he is both of a most stoute and of a most milde spirite, neyther is there any more stoute, nor more seruiceable then he, whoe can abide to doe none of those thinges that are exacted of him, and neuertheless doth all thinges euen most aboundantly, and as it were ouerfloweth with a floud of good workes, and watereth all thinges, no man commaunding him, or by way of controlement exacting and requiring any thinge of him, but he beinge permitted to doe voluntarilie and of his owne accord.

Christ humble & seruiceable *Matth.* 20. 28.

Christ both of a most stout and also of a most milde spirit.

These thinges are done for our example, that we may learne what a true Christian man is after the spirite, least we iudge him according to the lawe, and according to our owne wisedome and vnderstanding. For Christ is therefore our Lorde, that he may make such men of vs, as he is him selfe. And as he can not suffer him selfe to be tied and bounde with lawes, but will be Lorde of lawes, yea and of all thinges, so also ought not the conscience of a Christiã to suffer them. For we are so much made free by Christ, that our conscience may know nothing cõcerning any law, whose iudgement & controlement it may abide to suffer. Neither ought we any other wise to be affected according to the state of ỹ inward conscience, then if no lawe had bene giuen or made: yea as if neither x. cõmaundements, nor one, either of God, or of Bishop, or of Cesar were giuen to vs, that we may plainly say: I know nothing

The conscience of a Christian must not be bound with lawes.

of any law, neyther will I know any thing. For in that state and condition, wherein we Christians are, our workes, & the workes of all men do cease, yea and all lawes also. For where there is no worke, neither can there be any law, requiring a worke and saying: this thing was to be done of thee, this to be left vndone. But we through Christ are wholly free from all workes, and righteous by meere grace & mercie, whereby we liue only before God. And this is our treasure, wherby we are Christians, and liue and stand before God. For howe we ought to liue in outward conuersation, to wit in flesh and blood before the world, it doth nothing pertaine vnto this place.

A Christian must not suffer his cõscience to be held captiue of any law.

Wherefore a Christian must learne so to rule his conscience, that he suffer it not to be held captiue or entangled with any law. But whosoeuer will bind and hold it with any lawe, let him stoutly and boldly striue there against, and doe as he seeth Christ doe here and elsewhere, where he vseth so great stoutnes and earnestnesse of minde, that no Moses or Exactor of the lawe can preuaile any thinge with him, although otherwise he be most humble, most sweete and gentle of all men. Howbeit this art is aboue measure high and excellent, which none but he vnderstandeth, whereof he is the Maister, who knoweth howe to appease all lawes and teachers of lawes. We are not able to doe so: For the Deuill mightely assaileth vs, and as often as he setteth vpon the conscience of man, he driueth him to that poynt, that he entreth disputation with him, what he hath done or not done. Then such a disputation beginneth, as wherein is debated of our sinne and righteousnes, euen then man is brought into a daungerous case and into the myre, where he sticketh, neither can he escape or rid him selfe out, but is forthwith deeper and deeper plunged in. For he is laden with a heauie burden, which he is not able to beare, wherefore he walketh musing, gnawing & consuming his minde, neither can he get any quietnes thereof. Which I doe plainely feele in my selfe, neither can I wrastle out, and deliuer my selfe by any trauell, although I labour alwayes, assaying all meanes to escape out of this goulfe, that I may aunswere the lawe, and obtaine so much, that it may keepe silence, and say, now at length thou hast done so much, wherewith I am constrayned to be content. But all endeuour and study is in vayne: for such a deepe pit and daungerous goulfe it is, out of which no man is able to es-

We of our selues are not able to pacifie and appease the law.

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cape, although he ioyne the helpes of all men to him selfe, as they can beare me witnes which haue made triall hereof, and doe as yet dayly try it.

The cause is our nature, which will haue to doe with woorkes and lawes, and heare what they say, and follow them that say: Why doth he eate with Publicanes and sinners? if he did eate and drinke with vs, he should doe well. Also: why doe thy Disciples plucke the eares of corne on the Sabbath day? &c. with whō it will haue to doe so long, till the law sayth: now thou art righteous. For it can attaine to no higher vnderstanding, then that the doctrine of the lawe is the chiefest doctrine, and that the righteousnes thereof is the best life before God. In it it continually remaineth so captiue yea and bound, neither can it by any meanes deliuer it selfe out of this prison, being not able to pacifie and appease the law, that it doe not exact any thing of it, or reprehend it in any thing, but it is compelled to be captiue therein as in a perpetuall prison, and the longer it striueth & fighteth with the law, into so much worse case doth it alwayes come, vntill at the last it be wholy subdued.

What therefore must I doe, the law assailing and vrging my conscience, especially when I perceiue my selfe not to doe that which it requireth? I aunswer, euen that which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no lawe, although brought out of the lawe of God. So learne thou also to doe, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, leaue of law to dispute with me, I haue nothing to doe with thee. And for that very same cause, for which thou commest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not heare thee. For it here maketh no matter, what I am, or what I ought to doe, and what not to do, but what Christ him selfe is, ought to doe, and doeth. For now we are in the bridechamber, where onely the bridegrome and the bride must haue to doe, and it behoueth not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle any thing there. What a Christian must do when the law vrgeth his conscience.

But neuertheles it now and then knocketh and sayth: in the meane season notwithstanding good woorkes must be done of thee, the commaundements of God must be kept, if thou wilt obtayne saluation. Annswere agayne: but thou hearest that it is not nowe tyme to speake of them: for now I haue obtayned my righteousnes and the summe of all my saluation without my How we must aunswer the law when it is instant vpon vs.

woꝛkes in Chꝛiſt my Loꝛde, and am already ſaued beſoꝛe thou cameſt, theꝛefoꝛe I haue no neede of thy pꝛeſence. Foꝛ as I haue ſayd, where woꝛkes pꝛeuayle nothing, neyther is the lawe there of any impoꝛtance oꝛ weight, and where there is no lawe, neyther is there any ſinne. The Bꝛide theꝛefoꝛe alone, all the reſt being excluded, muſt reigne in the Bꝛidechamber with Chꝛiſt, in whome ſhe hath all thinges at once, neyther needeth ſhe any thing moꝛe, which is neceſſary to ſaluation. Wheꝛefoꝛe the law muſt be excluded and vtterly reiected, yea and caſt of, as often as it will inuade and ſet vpon the conſcience. Foꝛ ſurely it ought not to meddle therewith, neyther commeth it in tyme, when it will haue much to doe there, where it ought to haue nothing to doe, and whither it ought in no wiſe to come. Foꝛ the conſcience reſteth in this article of our Chꝛiſtian faith, I beleeue in Jeſus Chꝛiſt my Loꝛd, which ſuffered, dyed, and was buried foꝛ me, ꝛc. vnto whom both Moiſes law, and Cæſars, and diuine lawes ought to giue place. All that theꝛefoꝛe is boldly to be chaſed from me, whatſoeuer will diſpute with me of ſinnes, righteouſnes, and ſuch like things.

Beholde, Chꝛiſt would in this place reſemble this liberty vnto vs, that as Chꝛiſtians we ſuffer no Maiſter in our conſcience, truſting moſte conſtantly to this one thinge, that we are baptiſed, and called vnto Chꝛiſt, and by him iuſtified and ſanctified, whereuppon we may ſaye: He is my righteouſnes, my treaſure, my woꝛke, and in ſumme, what not agaynſt ſinne and vnrighteouſnes (whereof the lawe endeuoureth to accuſe me.) If it pleaſe you to haue other righteouſnes, woꝛkes, lawe, ꝛc. then may ye take them from whence ye will, ſurely ye ſhall finde no place foꝛ them in me. Thus may a man defende him ſelfe, and ſtande agaynſt the ſuggeſtions and tentations of the Deuill, and of ſinnes eyther paſt oꝛ pꝛeſent. Wheꝛefoꝛe Moiſes and Chꝛiſt are farre to be ſeparated aſunder, as alſo woꝛkes and faith, the conſcience and the outward life, ſo that if the lawe will ſette vppon me, and make my hart afrayde, then is it tyme to ſende it away, and if it will not giue place, to thꝛuſt it out by foꝛce, and to ſay: I will willingly doe good woꝛkes, and will goe foꝛward as much as I am able foꝛ that tyme that I liue amonge men, but here I wil know nothing at all of them in my cõſcience, & theꝛefoꝛe let me alone, & pꝛate nothing of them. Foꝛ here I wil

vouch-

vouchsafe to heare neither Moses nor the Pharisees, but Christ alone doth obtaine place to reigne here. I will like vnto Marie, sit at his feete to heare his worde, but let Martha tarie abroade, and busie her selfe in the kitchin and about the houshould affaires. And in summe, I will not trouble the quietnesse of my conscience.

But what shall I say, whereas in the meane season I doe dayly sinne, which surely is euill? I aunswere, in deede it is true, I am a sinner, and I do vniustly, but I must not therefore despeire, as though I were subiect to condemnation, yea or tremble because of the rigour of the lawe. For by faith I apprehende him, which hath apprehended me, and apply my selfe vnto him, which hath embraced me in baptisme, and hath put me in his bosom, and by the preaching of the Gospell hath called me to the communion of all his good thinges, bidding me to beleue in him. Nowe when as I haue apprehended him by faith, then may I be bolde to bid the Pharisees, and Moses with his tables, all Lawyers with their bookes, all men with their workes holde their peace and giue place. No lawe hath then any power to conuince or accuse me: for in this Christ I haue all thinges aboundantly, whatsoeuer can be required in me. An obiectiō. The answere

This, I say, is the doctrine and arte of Christians, the scope and ende whereof is this, euen to reigne with Christ. But blockish men doe not vnderstande it, taking hereupon occasion to liue more freely, as they list, saying what neede is there that I should do good workes, forasmuch as Christ hath abrogated the law, &c. Their foolish babbling is in no wise to be borne, for Christ is on the other part also to be considered of thee, and thou must marke what he doth more. For here he him selfe sayth: that he is that man which seeketh the miserable and lost sheepe, which also he witnesseth by his present deede, by receauing sinners and Publicanes, and by preaching vnto them. Whereby thou seest that he doth fulfill much more then the law commaundeth to be done, and teacheth thee to doe the same by his example. He is of such an heroicall stomacke, that he will not be vnder the lawe, yet doth he of his owne accorde moe thinges then the law requireth. Doe thou so also, neither looke when thou shalt be forced and driuen on by the lawe, but without the lawe and of thine owne accorde doe that which is needefull to be done, as Peter 1. Pet. 2. Albeit we be free from the law, we must neuertheles doe good workes after the example of Christ.

admoniſheth ſaying: as free, and not as hauing the libertie for a cloke of malitiouſnes, but as the ſeruauntes of God. And Paule Rom. 6. Being made free from ſinne, ye are made the ſeruaunts of righteouſnes. Theſe are they, which do all thinges with a free conſcience without the lawe, and vnconſtrained.

For when the Goſpell is truely in the hart, it maketh a man to be ſuch a one, as doth not looke while the law commeth, but is ſo full of ioy in Chriſt, that he is with ſpeede caried vnto good workes, doing well to all men, as much as he is able, & that of his owne accorde, before the law commeth into his minde. Moreouer he beſtoweth both body and life, hauing no regard, what he muſt therefore ſuffer, and ſo he is full of good workes which voluntarily flowing as it were out of a continuall fountayne are deriued vnto many: As Chriſt being compelled, doth not abide to take vp ſo much as a ſtrawe, but vncompelled giueth him ſelfe to be crucified for me, and for the whole worlde, dying for the loſt ſheepe.

Howbeit it is very neceſſarie to diſcerne theſe thinges well, when it is come to hande ſtrokes and within the throwing of the dart, as it is ſaid, the law and ſinnes diſputing now with thy conſcience, then ſee that thou doe boldly repreſſe Moſes, and bid him keepe ſilence, ſending him abroade to the olde man. Driue him into Moſes ſchoole, that he may diſpute with him and ſay: Doeſt thou heare? thou art too ſlowe and ſluggiſh in giuing and ſeruing thy neighbour. When Chriſt is to be ſerued of thee, thou wilt more willinglie ſerue thy bellie: thou wilt come in no perill for Chriſts ſake, thou doeſt deceitfully robbe thy neighbour circumuenting him by what meanes ſoeuer thou canſt. For that ſluggiſh aſſe flying labour, and following only idlenes and wantonnes, vſe the tables of ſtone, whom euen againſt his wil, conſtraine, to goe on in his duety.

The old mā muſt be driuen into Moſes ſchoole.

Wherefore when thou ſhalt ſet vpon me, in that thinge which is right and meete (thou muſt ſay vnto Moſes) I will willinglie heare thee, and follow thy admonitions, namely according to the outward man, and in outward life, where thou mayeſt beare rule like a ſchoolemaiſter, & as one gouerning a familie: Where thou haſt power to cōmaund me, to be obedient, modeſt, patient, good to my neighbour, dutifull and liberall toward the poore, & to celebrate God with praiſes poured forth to his glorie: moreouer to

We muſt admitte Moſes to deale with the outward man, but not with the cōſcience.

be

be content for his wordes sake to abide the contumelies & sclaunders of all persons, & to suffer euery kind of iniurie of the world. With all which I am not greatly moued, yea I would doe more things then I am able to do according to the outward man. For the spirite, by the testimony of Christ, is willing, and ready, although the flesh be weake.

But if thou wilt goe so farre, whither it is vnlawfull for thee to come, that is, into my hart and conscience, there will I neither see thee, nor vouchsafe to heare thee. For there I haue an other both great and vnspeakeable treasure, whose name is Christ. And in summe, whatsoeuer pertaineth to bridle the outward man, thou canst not lay on a sufficient burden thereof: but thou must burden the conscience nothing at all. For he that enioyeth Christ, is aboue all lawes, as Paule sayth: the law is not giuen for the iust, who notwithstanding in the meane time doth more things, then he is able to fulfill in the flesh. For according to the lawe we are sinners, and concerning our person we must abide vnder it. But through Christ we are farre aboue the law.

So Moises without Christ must exercise his grosse workes, whereby he may compell men which are not yet Christians, to be honest ciuily before the world: for he doth not make Christians righteous and honest. Howbeit I will not deny that he doth this, that he sheweth vnto them their duties, which otherwise they would willingly fulfill and satisfie, yea and doe moe things also, but that the flesh doth not so willingly and with that readines wherewith it ought, follow the spirite. In which respect they are to be admonished and vrged, the conscience neuertheles remayning free, so that the law haue no power to accuse them. Wherefore such doctrine and admonition ought to be among Christians (as it is certaine that amonge the Apostles there was) whereby euery man may be admonished of his state and office. As for the rest which are not Christians, they must be ruled by Moises lawes, and burdened with them both outwardly and inwardly, whereby they may be forced and afflicted, that they may doe that which is right, forsaking that which is euil, although they doe it not with a patient and willing mind. Of which kind the rash multitude of the vntruly common sort & the obstinat people is, who do not regard or vnderstand the libertie of Christ, although they cã babble & glory of many things concerning the gospel, & they not-

Who they be which must be vnder the discipline of Moises.

withstanding doe abuse it onely to the lust of their mind: let them know that they are vnder the discipline and correction of Moises.

For they are not such men, as are capable of this doctrine, which liue with such a secure mind, that they thinke, they haue no neede of the Gospell, or that they otherwise doe sufficiently know it. But they onely are capable hereof, which are busied with the disputation of the conscience & the law, of sinnes and of the wrath of God, by consideration whereof they become astonied, feeling the words of the hart speaking thus: Alas, how wretchedly haue I led my life? what account shall I make vnto God: and so they be too much fearefull and amased, the rest being more then is meete, secure and presumptuous, feeling no law nor sinne, no nor any trouble at all. And the case standeth very vnequally with both, for they which should haue nothing to doe with the lawe, do most of all wrastle with it, and alone feele it. But others of whom onely the lawe should be felt, are nothing moued with it: yea the more grieuously they are terrified by the lawe and the wrath of God, by so much they become more indurate. There must therefore be an other maister to amend these, namely, the slayer & tormentor, who may teach them, being vnwilling to doe well in the name of the Lord and with fauour, in the name of an other to doe that that becommeth them, with no fauour, the reward also of hel fire and of all miseries being set before them.

Howbeit Christ both here and euery where else (as it is sayd) both by doctrine & also by his owne example teacheth vs, which feele our sinnes and the burden of the lawe, and would willingly be Christians, to accustom our selues to fight against it, & driue it from vs vnto others, to giue no place to the deuill, who would by the law breake vp the bridechamber of Christ, and thrust him selfe into his place, that is, take away from the conscience her ioy and comfort, whereby he may drawe man into desperation, that he may not be able cheerefully to lift vppe his heart and heade before God. For this is the arte of Christians whome it behoueth to knowe and learne moe thinges, then that prophane and blockishe common sorte knoweth and vnderstandeth, that we may knowe well the maner howe to fight with the deuill, and to beare his assault, as often as he shall set vpon vs, and dispute with vs out of Moises. With whome when he goeth about such things, we must not dispute in many wordes, but must forthwith

Christians must know how to fight against the deuill and to beare his assaultes.

appeale

appeale from Moises to Christ, and cleaue to him. For all his trauails & deceits tend vnto this end, that he may craftely plucke vs from Christ, and draw vs vnto Moises. For he knoweth full well, the matter being brought to that poynt, the victorie shall be on his side.

We must take most diligent heede that the deuill plucke vs not from Christ to Moises.

Wherefore thou must againe and againe take heede that thou suffer not thy selfe to be plucked out of this hauen, neyther to be entised out of this circle. And although he shall lay many things against the out of the lawe, euen inasmuch as it is the worde of God, whereunto it is meete that thou doe obey, yet mayest thou aunswere him and saye: doest thou not heare, that I will nowe knowe or heare nothing concerning the lawe? for we are now in that circle and hauen, wherein it is not inquired what I must do, or leaue vndone, but by what meanes we obtaine to haue God gentle and fauourable vnto vs, and howe we gette remission of sinnes. Here I will abyde in the armes of Christ, cleauing vnseparably about his necke, and creeping into his bosom, whatsoeuer the lawe shall say, and my heart shall feele: neuertheles, so that we keepe the principall part of our faith sincere, and the chiefe poynt safe, outwardly I will willingly do and suffer, what burden soeuer it shall lay vpon me. Beholde, he that vnderstoode this arte well, should be a right and perfect man, as Christ was, so farre aboue all lawes, that he might be bold to call Peter Satan, and the Pharisees fooles, and leaders of the blinde, and put Moises him selfe to silence, and so liue altogither without the lawe, and yet in the meane season fulfill all lawes: furthermore be obstinate and stout against all that will enforce and constraine him, and yet notwithstanding of his owne accord profite and obey all. But truely herein consisteth all the defect, that we doe neuer fully and perfectly learne this arte, the Deuill so letting and hindering vs, that we goe preposterously to worke, being too ready and willing to heare all things whatsoeuer the lawe sayth. At whose threatnings also we are not a litle astonied, which it had bene better for vs not to haue heard. Againe in outward thinges also we giue our selues to libertie more then is conuenient, whereas the body should be kept vnder and brideled with workes, whereby it might be compelled to beare whatsoeuer shoulde be grieuous vnto it, when as yet it often times sinneth, yet so, that sinne abyde without, where it must abyde, and haue his Moises, who

alwayes may be neare vnto it with his exactions. Howbeit inwardly let no sinne or law beare rule, or reigne, but let Christ alone rule and reigne by mere grace, ioy & comfort. So all things should be done rightly, and man should be apt and fit to all good things, both to doe, and also to suffer, with a glad and obedient heart by faith not fayned in the grace of God through Christ. Wherefore let the conscience beare rule ouer all lawes, let the flesh be subiect to euery law.

Now he that is skilfull of this arte, let him giue thankes to God, and take heede that he be not too wise in it, and that he conceiue not a false perswasion of knowledge. For I and my like doe not yet vnderstand it, as we ought to vnderstand it, although we be most expert of all, and haue bene longest exercised therein. For (as I haue sayd) it is such an arte, as no man knoweth, but they which are Christians, to the learning whereof notwithstanding they are compelled to be scholers all their life long. Wherefore most farre of from the knowing hereof are those secure spirites, who alone know al things, but who in very deede beside that false perswasion of knowledge, know nothing at all, and by this very perswasion they are farthest of all drawne from this arte & from the whole Gospell. Neither is there any thing more grieuous, no nor a greater hurt can be brought vnto Christianitie, then by these pettie doctours and maisters, which seeme vnto them selues to haue some wisedom. For they fill all corners of the world with sects & factions, being such men, as serue neither God nor men, heare neither the law nor the Gospell, but contemne the law with a secure mind, and loath the Gospell with hearing it, alwayes seking after new doctrine. But truely we teach nothing for their sakes, inasmuch as they are not worthy of our doctrine, and are so punished of God, that they can neuer learne it, and bring forth any frute thereby, although they heare it. Therefore let vs onely keepe it, whereof they doe take away nothing at all from vs, but that they heare a vaine noyse and sound of it.

And thus much for the first part of this sermon, in which Christ teacheth by his owne example, how euery man ought to keepe his conscience free from all disputation of the law, and terrour of the wrath of God and of sinnes. Nowe consequently I thinke it good diligently to consider this excellent and goodly parable of Christ, where he beginneth and sayth: What man of you ha- Luke 15.3.

uing

uing an hundreth sheepe, if he lose one of them, doth not leaue ninetie and nine in the wildernes, and go after that which is lost vntill he finde it? Christ is not onely of a stout minde, who will not followe the wordes and maistership of them, but he bringeth probable causes also of his stoutnes, with great cunning refelling their obiections, and stopping their mouthes, so, that they can murmure nothing against him. Moreouer he conuinceth them by their owne example and deede, and concludeth, that they ought for good cause to be vtterly ashamed, being bold to speake vnto him, & reprehēd that in him in so great a matter, which they themselues do in a much lesse. For by what meanes could he better and more readily aunswere them, then if he should say: Will you, O excellent and most wise maisters, commaund this thing, and teache me to driue away and alienate from me miserable sinneas, which long after me, and come to heare me, when as there is nothing that you your selues doe not for one lost sheepes sake, who leauing ninetie and nine in the wildernes (that is in the field and at the fold) doe runne to seeke that which is lost, neither doe ye leaue of seeking, vntill such time, as ye haue founde it, and brought it home? And you count it to be well and commendablie done, for which if any should finde fault with you, without dout ye would reproue him as mad and beside him selfe. And shoulde not I as a Sauiour of soules doe likewise with men, as you doe with a lost sheepe? seing there is no comparison euen of one soule to all the creatures liuing & breathing in the earth. Why therefore are you not vtterlie ashamed of your doinges, presuming to reprehende me in this worke, which you your selues commende, and are forced to commende? Wherefore if ye reproue and finde fault with me, you your selues are first to be reproued and founde fault with. This is rightly to haue aunswered, and with honour to haue stopped the mouthes of these controllers & fault finders, the causes being sufficiently shewed, why they ought not here to finde fault with him or controlle him. They haue well surelie yeelded vnto him with shame enough, as it is meete, and haue gained nothing els by their maistership and controllement then vtter shame and ignominie. For it is a shame to such maisters, yea and an exceeding great abomination, that they sticke not to arrogate so much vnto them selues, as to teache that man, and admonish him of his dutie, who of God is appointed a maister ouer

How Christ aunswered the Scribes & Phārisees when they murmured for that he receaued sinners vnto him.

all. But it ought so to fall out, as I haue sayd, that he which will rule & iudge a Christian by his maisterships, and endeoureth to bring him from his baptisme and the article of Christ, to be ruled by his wisedom or law, doth not onely become a foole, but is also the author of extreame abomination & homicide. For he worketh shame to the temple & sanctuarie of God, and with deuilish rashnes inuadeth his kingdome, where he alone with the holy Ghost must reigne. Wherfore he very well deserueth, that God againe bring him to shame and ignominie before the whole world, seing that he taketh to him selfe maistership in that place, where onely Christ ought to be maister, and not vnworthely to his great euill he kicketh against the pricke.

Wherefore it is not good to iest with Christians, for they are Saincts, and let him that is wise, not be too busie with that man, whose name is Christ, for he can get no gaine thereby, for Christ is most impatient of all their maistership and doctrine. So also a Christian must by no meanes suffer them, for if he suffer them, giuing place to such suggestions, to witte, thou oughtest to haue done this or that, or as yet thou oughtest to do it, then is his case become exceeding ill, inasmuch as he hath fallen from Christ. Therefore we must endeuour, to hold Christ fast, hauing no regard, although all the world shall teach vs. For if we shall abide with him, and holde the true vnderstanding of the article concerning him, we shall easilie ouercome all suche maisters and teachers. For this Christ will be most free from all controlement & maistership, contending to be the onely master and controller of all men, that either in fauour they may reuerently acknowledge him for the Lord and maister, and them selues for fooles, or in furie and indignation being subiect to the reproch of all men, may vtterly perish.

We must in any wise cleaue fast vnto Christ.

But I haue sayed before, that the present doctrine for the berie exceeding goodnes, sweetenes, and consolation thereof, is not to be set forth to the rude, blockish, and vnruly common sort, to whom we doe not preach it, but to those onely, which striue with terrour and anguish of conscience, or stand in perill and daunger of death, and dispute with the deuill concerning their sinnes committed, whereby he would driue them vnto desperation. Before these this amiable image is to be set, whereby they may receaue comfort and cheerefulnes of minde. As for others which liue

with

with a secure mind, and doe litle know what anguish and spiritu-all sorrowfulnes is, they are to be led to Moises to the tormentor. For it is an image most pleasant and amiable, and more artificially painted, then any Apelles is able to paynt with his pensill. Neither doth any man excell in such eloquence of speech, that he is able sufficiently to declare & comprehend it in wordes. Wherfore it is to be apprehended in the hart by faith, as much as may be. Neuertheles we must speake something of it, that we may giue cause and occasion to other to thinke and consider more earnestly thereof.

I also, sayth he, haue an hundred sheepe, that is, that litle flock of all Christendom, of which number one is lost, and fallen from the communion of Christians. Nowe therefore doest thou desire to know the affection of my mind? then must thou bestow thy diligence, to paint out well and cunningly both the shepeheard and the lost sheepe. For that shepeheard, which is but a man, and guideth the flocke, which is created to be slayne, hath great regard to preserue it in safetie, and is not a litle carefull, howe he may finde the sheepe when it is lost, and bringe it home agayne, and with no lesse desire the sheepe longeth after the shepeheard. Whom if it vnderstand to be his owne shepeheard (as by nature it doth vnderstand) it feareth him not, but runneth vnto him with great confidence, and being full of good hope, goeth before him. Yea as soone as euer it heareth his voice, it aunswereth by bleating. On the other side also the shepeheard hath great care and desire to finde againe the lost shepe, which hath straied from him. Both he him selfe seketh, & sendeth forth seruaunts to seke there, whithersoeuer he thinketh it is strayed, neyther doth he leaue seeking, vntill hauing found it, he hath brought it home. For he is not ignorant how miserable a liuing creature a solitary sheepe is, whose life consisteth onely in the helpe and safe keeping of the shepeheard, inasmuch as it can nothing at all helpe it selfe, but being destitute of a shepeheard, is constrayned to perish. Moreouer, it is also fearfull and ready to goe astray, and as soone as it hath wandered out of the way, and from the shepeheard, forthwith commeth into perill of life, & can not tary, although being brought, it commeth to an other flocke, and a straunge shepeheard calleth it, neuertheles it goeth on through thornye and sedgie places, through waters and fennes, vntill it come in daunger

How the sheepe is affected toward his shepeheard.

The affection of the shepeheard toward his sheepe.

of the wolfe, or wasted by some other mischiefe vtterly perisheth. And although it be brought into bywaies and deserts, and is now thought to be lost, notwithstanding it hath this hope, as much as nature hath put into it, that if it might heare his shepeheard, it should forthwith exceedingly reioyce being deliuered from all euill. Moreouer neither doth the shepeheard therefore seeke it, that when he hath found it, he may wrathfully fight with it, or handle it ill for that it hath gone astray, or cast it to the wolfe to be torne in peeces, but al his care and thought is, that he may most gentlely allure it to him selfe, and may deale with it most louingly, to wit, lay it on his shoulders and carry it, vntill he hath brought it vnto the rest of the flocke.

This is that picture, resembled in this creature a silly beast, whereby Christ sheweth vnto vs, what affection of minde he beareth, and what he doth toward vs, and also what we ought to promise our selues concerning him. For seeing this is manifestly true in nature, the same is much more true in the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of grace, loue, and consolation. Therefore see that thou also doe set before thy self the sheepe pertaining to this shepeheard, then shalt thou truly vnderstand, how much greater and vehementer care he hath taken to preserue it, also with how great study and diligence, yea and from the hart he is careful for it, that he may find it and bring it home againe. For he will haue his maruelous and continuall kindnes, and the vnspeakeable flames of his most feruent loue to be shewed, or rather poured forth vpon miserable, fearefull and trembling consciences, which vnfaynedly lament their sinnes, and desire to be deliuered from them, and such are his true sheepe.

The parable of the shepeheard & the lost sheepe resembleth Christ, & the Christian that is strayed out of the way.

For with a man that hath lost this shepeheard, and heareth him not, the case standeth as with the lost sheepe, which beeing estraunged from his shepeheard, strayeth more and more from him. And although it be called by the voyces of others, and runneth vnto them, thinking that it shall finde his owne shepeheard, yet failing of his purpose it findeth him not, but alway runneth from corner to corner, straying vp and downe, and still wandreth farther out of the way. Neither it is succoured with any comfort or helpe, before it heare the voyce of the true shepeheard sounding agayne in his eares: euen as we learne the same to be true by dayly experience, and euery man tryeth it in his owne hart.

heart. For the Gospell of Christ being taken away or not exercised, here some false maister, or author of some sect, in an other place some fantasticall fellowe thrusteth in him selfe, one peruerteth the Supper of the Lorde, the other baptisme, one teacheth this, the other that, of a singular holines of life, both which alloureth to him selfe the miserable and straying sheepe, and sheweth him selfe so, as though he were the true shepeheard. But by the meanes of these the sheepe is entangled onelie with greater errours, vntill it wandreth quite and altogether out of the way. To these commeth the deuill also with his cogitations, which he craftely putteth into the heart: Alas, if thou hadst done this or that, or hadst not done, &c. with all which he practiseth nothing else, but that he may make it fall into greater errours, that it may not know where to abide. And this truly falleth out, Christ being remoued out of sight, and the article of him being extinguished. Whatsoeuer moreouer shalbe taught, counselled, & shewed, by what meanes soeuer, all thinges neuertheleſſe become worse and draw nere vnto destruction, vnleſſe the true shepeheard come with his voyce, and call backe and bring againe the straying sheepe.

It is very necessarie to learne to know Christ a right.

Hereupon it appeareth that it is exceeding necessarie and conuenient, that we larne to knowe Christ well, that we doe not behold him as a cruell tyranne or as an angrie iudge (as the preachers hitherto haue set him forth to the people, and the deuill him selfe sheweth him to the hearts of men no otherwise to be thought vpon and considered) who hath drawen his sword already against vs: But as the sheepe doth naturallie looke on the shepeheard, not as on him, of whom it shall be terrified, chased, and slaine, but so soone as it beholdeth him, is cheered and put in hope of helpe, & is no more in feare or solitarines, but forthwith speedely goeth to him with all boldnes: So also when we desire to conceaue a trust and hope of helpe, and to be strengthened and eased with comfort, then the voice of our shepeheard, that is of Christ, must be knowen and learned well of vs, all voyces of other shepeheards not regarded, which draw vs onely into errours, and tosse vs vp and downe, and that onely article must be heard and comprehended in minde, which Christ so louingly and comfortably painteth in our heart, as by any meanes it can be painted, that I may with al confidence and boldnes say: The Lord Iesus Christ

is my onely shepeheard, and I (alas) the lost sheepe, which hath strayed in the desert, but am troubled with no small anguish of mynde for my wretched life, desiring with most feruent affection, both to haue God fauourable vnto me, & also to haue peace in my conscience. But truely I vnderstand here, that he is no lesse desirous of me, then I am of him. I labour with great carefulnes to come vnto him, and he is careful and desireth greatly that he may bring me againe vnto him selfe.

If we were certainly thus perswaded of his affection towarde vs, and did graue in our minde that it so greatly desireth after vs, and is so sweetely poured forth vpon vs, it can not be, that we shoulde abhorre and feare him, but we woulde with a cheerefull minde runne vnto him, and tary onely with him, abyding to heare the doctrine or voice of no other. For the doctrine of an other cõming betwene, either of Moses or of any other whatsoeuer, doth nothing else but trouble and disquiet the conscience, so that it can neuer finde any peace or quietnesse. Therefore Christ sayeth Matth. 11. Come vnto me all ye that are wearie and laden, and I will ease you. Take my yoke on you, and ye shall finde rest vnto your soules, &c. As though he sayed: runne and seeke in what places soeuer ye will, heare and learne whatsoeuer can be preached vnto you, yet shall ye finde no quietnesse of heart, ye shall finde no peace but in me alone. We will easily permit good workes to be preached, a righteous life to be taught, the ten commaundements to be deliuered by instruction, and all thinges else which serue to the amendement of life, but so farre onely, as they are taught to the vnrulie and vntractable common sorte, also to force and bridle the wantonnes of our old Adam. But they which preache to the conscience wrapped in anguishes and terrours because of sinne, ought to preache no other worde then of Christ. For this is that lost and miserable sheepe, of whom no other matter is to be borne or had, but that onely sheepheard Christ, who neither vrgeth it with the lawe, nor is eger vpon it, but most sweetely and gently handleth it, and layeth the miserable and sinfull sheepe vpon his shoulders, doing that of his owne accorde, which was to be done of the sheepe, as we shall heare by and by more at large.

No peace or quietnes but in Christ alone.

But surely in this place the doctrine of both (as is before also sayed at large) or the voyce of Moses and of Christ, must be well

well discerned. For Moses ought to haue no entrance to the lost sheepe, no nor by any meanes is to be admitted to it, although he preache best of all other. For if confounding these, we will comfort and erect the trouble conscience by the lawe after this sorte: be of a good cheere, for thou hast not committed homicide, neyther hast thou defiled thy selfe with adulterie, neyther hast thou perpetrated any other haynous offence, or done it with a good will, &c. This also is a comfort, but which can endure a verie small time, neither can it sustaine the assaults and violence of the enemie, neither bringeth it or contayneth any thing else but confidence of it selfe, wherewith the miserable sheepe is holpen nothing. For it remayneth as much wandring and lost as before, neither can it helpe it selfe, or come to his owne shepeheard. But if we will helpe & succour it, we must shew vnto it the true shepeheard, who commeth to seeke it, that hauing founde it he may bring it home againe, and exhibit his voyce vnto it to be heard. Hereby it may obtaine true and effectuall consolation, and be bold to aunswere Moses, and say: Nowe truely I haue not any care either of thy comfort or terrour, and if it please thee, amplifie my sinnes as much as possiblie thou canst, make me a manslayer and parricide, or the worst man of all men. For now I will neither heare thee with an astonied minde, nor followe thee. But this is the summe of my comfort and saluation, whereunto also I do confidently trust, that I haue such a shepeheard as seeketh me of his owne accord, and hauing layed me on his shoulders carieth me. Let vs enter disputation hereof if thou art so disposed, not howe righteous or vnrighteous I am, but howe I haue come vnto Christ.

The difference betwene the doctrine of Moses & of Christ must be throughly knowen vnto Christians.

Wherefore we must alwayes preach according to the capacitie and qualitie of the hearers. For I haue sayed that this doctrine is not fit for a blockish and vntractable man. As it is not meete ẏ a laborious thresher should be fed with delicates, where with the sicke are to be strengthened and refreshed, but the hyreling is to be fed with broune bread and cheese, & with water. The other daintie meates and easie of digestion thou must reserue for the sicke or children, which are able to digest no grosse meat: So in this thing also thou must obserue the same difference, that thou doe rightly distribute these thinges, and giue vnto euerie one his portion as a prudẽt householder. For thou must kepe the doctrine

Vnto whom Moises law must be preached.

of Moſes and of the Lawe, vntill thou light vpon vnruly, hardened, and vntractable men, which lead their life ſecurely and without feare, ſet before theſe only ſtrong & common meates of threshers to be eaten, ỳ is, offer angrie Moſes vnto them to be heard, who lighteneth and thundreth from the mount Sina, who terrifieth the people of Iſraell, bringeth them into the deſert, and drowneth king Pharao in the red ſea. But when thou ſhalt light vpon troubled heartes, and weake & afflicted conſciences, which are now become loſt ſheepe, then ſpeake not a worde concerning Moſes and all the workes of God done in the lawe, but let thy talke be only of the workes done by Chriſt in the time of grace, & well and diligently repeate to the miſerable conſcience, howe he ſheweth himſelfe toward the loſt ſhepe, to wit, that he is the gẽtle & good ſhepeheard, which is exceeding carefull for the loſt ſhepe, ſo that leauing all the reſt, he traueleth to finde that one, and to bring it againe into the way, neither doth he leaue of till he hath brought it home. For it is a verie great griefe vnto him, that any man ſhoulde be in ſinne, and therefore be troubled and feare, neither woulde he that any ſhoulde remaine therein, and ſo periſh. Wherefore he doth moſt louingly allure and prouoke thee by his ſweete Goſpell to come vnto him, & ſuffer thy ſelfe to be layd vpõ his ſhoulders and caried, and to be called his welbeloued ſheepe.

How weake and afflicted conſciences muſt be preached vnto.

As for them that liue ſecurely and pleaſauntly, and haue no regard whether God be angrie or pleaſed, they are not to be called loſt ſheepe, but rather wilde goats, which ſuffer not themſelues either to be fed or ruled. But he, to whom his ſynnes are a burden, & who fighteth in the fight of faith, where he is not in daũger to loſe Moſes, but Chriſt himſelfe, and the principall article, that is, where the conſcience is in anguiſh, and feare, whether it hath God gentle and fauourable, this is that verie man, who with groning and ſighes ſeeketh out and crieth for his ſhepeheard, and deſireth to be holpẽ, as Dauid doth Pſal. 119. I haue gone aſtray like a ſheepe that is loſt: oh ſeeke thy ſeruaunt, &c. In the mouth of theſe this ſuger and theſe pleaſant delicates haue a good taſt, with which the heart is refreſhed, that it fall not into deſperation, but being againe recreated with ſuch a conſolation, is lifted vp, not by Moſes but by Chriſt. Not that it hath Moſes a frend or is able to pacifie him, but becauſe it hath God fauourable through Chriſt, whereſoeuer Moſes remayneth with his comfort. Although

The loſt ſheepe.

though it be very well, as also it is meete, that we doe not contrary to the law practise theuerie, that we steale not, that we commit not homicide, or otherwise doe iniurie and hurt to our neighbour. Howbeit that is not the right comfort of the heart, but only a momentane tickling of the vtmost skinne, not during and pearsing. For the deuill comming and setting vpon the heart, all comfort is vterly taken away. And although in some poynt thou hast done well and rightly, he neuertheles againe bringeth tenne fold more, wherin thou hast done amisse, yea euen in the most pure workes he can finde much impuritie, and turne all into sinne.

No true cõfort of conscience to be had by the law.

Wherefore we must in no wise trust vnto such comfort, but must rather refuse it and say: whether I be good or euill at this present I do not dispute, but wil reserue it rather vnto that place, where it shall be taught and entreated concerning workes. But in this circle wherein I now stand, there is no place to entreate of workes and integritie of life, but of Christ and his workes, which he doth toward me a lost shepe. Wherfore if thou demaũd whether I be good or honest, I aunswer plainely, no, but if thou demaund whether Christ be good and righteous, that vndoubtedly I am able to confirme, & him I set for my goodnes and righteousnes, vnto whom also alone I couragiously appeale. For in his name I am baptised, of which thing I haue a seale and testimony, to wit, that I am his shepe, and that he is that good shepeheard, seeking his lost shepe, & dealing with me without all lawe, exacting nothing of me, neither as Moises vrgeth, troubleth, and forceth me, but sheweth vnto me his meere & most sweete grace, while he submitteth him self to me, & layeth me on his shoulders, and carieth me. Why therefore should I feare the thundrings of Moises and of the deuill, when as I rest in his safe custody, which hath giuen vnto me his righteousues and all other things, which holdeth and carieth me, so that there is now no more daunger lest I perish, I remaining a shepe and denying not my shepeheard, but reposing my selfe wholy in him?

We must not trust to the comfort of the law, but must resort and cleaue fast vnto Christ.

Thus hast thou Christ most louingly set forth vnto thee. Now onely faith is required, whereof there is great neede. For this doctrine is excellent, and replenished with most sweete consolation and comfort, but this is wanting, that the vse thereof is not felt, where it ought to be felt. For when the shepe goeth astray, that is, when a man feeleth him selfe grieued with his sinnes, and can

A hard thing to feele true comfort of conscience.

not tell where to abide, and is cast of the deuill into a great feare of minde, then he alwayes runneth vnto the contrary, neither can he comprehend or conceiue in minde, that this is true, all things falling out of his minde, which he heard here, because of the present feeling and feare. For the deuill hath daseled his eyes, neyther can he perceiue any thing els but the wrath and indignation of God. Wherewith his heart is so burdened, that he is not able to raise vppe him selfe in minde, and to turne his eyes any other where. May he lyeth so drowned in it, that Christ appeareth no otherwise vnto him but as an angry Iudge, as he hath hitherto bene painted out, and is so beaten into the harts of all by the wicked Papistes, sitting on the rayne bowe, with a sword comming out of his mouth. For this is one of the most deceitfull crastes of the deuill, yea and of his mischieses which he practiseth agaynst the miserable sheepe, to dasle his eyes, that he may not know any more his owne shepeheard, and vnder a pretence of Christ to leade a man to Moises, disputing as much of Christ, as he had accustomed to doe before of Moises. Wherefore we haue neede of a stronge and firme faith, that we may beleue these thinges to be true, when a man him selfe must dispute euen against him selfe. For the sense is vehement of it selfe, wherunto the deuill also commeth marueilously amplifying sinne and terrour, the greatnes and anguish whereof is able to consume euen the marrow in ỹ bones, yea and the heart in the bodye. It can not therefore be perfectly learned so soone as some thinke. In prosperitie it is easily beleued that Christ is sweete and amiable, but anguish and terrour comming vpon and ouerwhelming the minde, man is blinde and without good vnderstanding, and will iudge onely according to the sense and vnderstanding of his owne heart, which he followeth, and confirmeth him selfe in his owne errour. For he is taken therein, and can thinke no otherwise, but that it is true, and neuertheles it is not true.

How a Christian must speake vnto his owne heart.

Now it were a point of this arte, for a man thus to say vnto his heart, if thou confesse thy selfe to be a lost shepe, thou sayest right: but that thou wilt therefore runne from Christ, and so thinke of him in thy minde, as though he were a man, which would chase and terrifie thee, it is a suggestion and tentation of the deuill. For if thou didst rightly consider him, and confesse him as thy true shepeheard, then wouldest thou not flie from his sight, neyther

wouldest

wouldeſt conceaue terrour in thy minde, but with all chereſulnes and boldnes wouldeſt runne vnto him. For ſurely he is not therefore readie at hand that he may condemne thee, but he commeth to thee, ſeeking thee, that hauing layed thee on his ſhoulders, he may carie thee, and exempt and deliuer thee from ſinnes, errours, the deuil and his power, yea and from all peril. Thou perceaueſt therefore that thou art a ſinner, and haſt deſerued indignation, ſo much more earneſtly is that ſhepeheard to be ſought and called for of thee, that he may deliuer thee from it: of whom conſider no otherwiſe in thy minde, then the ſhepe doth of his owne ſhepeheard, whom it can not feare, but ſeeing & hearing him becommeth glad and cheerefull, although it hath runne from him, ſo that for this deede it hath a ſufficient cauſe to feare. The whole matter therefore conſiſteth onely in this, that thou doe perfectly learne Chriſt aright, and conſider him according to the worde of God, and not according to the proper cogitations of thy minde, and thine owne ſenſes. For the cogitations of men are falſe and lying, but his wordes are true and can not deceaue. Wherefore the worde alone is to be engrauen in our heart, & we muſt cleaue vnto it with a conſtant minde, wherby we may reproue our owne heart of lying. For it alone muſt be true, and all thinges elſe that are contrarie to it, falſe & vaine. But truly this is an arte, whereof I am ignorant, but much more thoſe other light ſpirites, who boaſt many thinges of it, as they that know all thinges, when as they haue euen once heard any thing thereof, & neuertheleſſe they doe not a litle perceaue or trie ſo much as any whit of it. For it is an eaſie thing to ſpeake and preach of it, but howe hard a thing it is to proue it in deede, they onely haue experience, who earneſtly make triall thereof.

We muſt conſider Chriſt according to the worde of God.

This is a moſt amiable demonſtration of our Chriſt, deſcribed by him ſelfe in this Goſpell, wherein he hath moſt abundantly poured forth the flames of his moſt feruent heart, and affection toward vs, ſhewing that he hath exceeding great care and regard to recouer his ſhepe, which alone leauing ninety and nine he ſeeketh and enquireth diligently for, not to terrifie it and beate it, but that he may helpe it, and hauing founde it, may bring it home, and with his louing and ſweete voyce and ſpeaking vnto it may cheere it being miſerable and afflicted in conſcience. By all which thou ſeeſt, howe acceptable a thing thou ſhalt doe vnto

him, if thou truſt and cleaue vnto him with thy whole heart, and promiſe to thy ſelfe from him all goodnes and loue.

Secondly thou plainly ſeeſt this alſo, how by all maner of outward ſignes and meanes he poureth forth his ioy and vnſpeakeable goodnes, & alſo hauing found his ſheepe howe louing he ſheweth him ſelfe. For ſurely he dealeth not with it by any lawe, as by his right he might deale, & driue it before him as he doth the reſt, or ſuffer it to goe by him. Howbeit he doth none of theſe, but layeth it vpon his ſhoulders, & all the iourney carieth it through the deſert, taking all the labour and trouble vpon him ſelfe, that at the leſt wiſe the ſheepe may reſt. Neither doth he it grudgingly but willingly, for he is ful of ioy for his ſhepe recouered. Now marke this alſo, how wel it goeth with the ſhepe, with how great quietnes and eaſe it lyeth on his ſhepeheardes ſhoulders, neither doth it vnwillingly ſee it ſelfe reſting ſo ſweetely being deliuered from the difficulty of the iourney, as alſo voyd of all feare both of dogges and woulues, that is, of all errours and lyes, yea and of all perills and miſchiefes. And this ſurely deſerueth to be called a very pleſaunt picture, exceeding amiable and comfortable to be looked vpon.

No otherwiſe doth our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt deale with vs, whiles he deliuereth vs, which he hath once done corporallie by his paſſion and death, but nowe doth eftſoones the ſame by his power, and ſpiritually by the preaching of his word. Wherefore he layeth vs vpon his ſhoulders, carieth, and defendeth vs, ſo that we are ſafe from all perils of death and the deuill, which albeit they terrifie vs, and ſhewe them ſelues ſo, as though they would deuour vs, yet preuayle they nothing. For whereas we are caried, it is a ſafegard vnto vs, and the ſame exempteth vs from all daungers, and putteth awaye all feare. As the ſheepe lying vpon the ſhepeheards ſhoulders is lytle carefull, though the dogges barke much, and the woulfe craftily goeth vp and downe, but rather hanging downe the heade is quiet and ſleepeth ſoundly. So we alſo, if we ſtand and abide vnmoueablie in this article, I beleeue in Ieſus Chriſt our Lorde, who ſuffered, dyed, roſe againe for vs, &c. there is no cauſe why we ſhould be careful leaſt we periſh, or be deuoured of the deuill, though he open his iawes neuer ſo wide. For we are not then in our owne way, neyther walke we vpon our owne feete, but we hange vpon the necke of

If we beleue aſſuredly in Chriſt Ieſus, we nede not feare the deuell, rage he neuer ſo ſore

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our shepeheard, and lye vpon his shoulders, where we are safe enough. For sinne, death, and hell, although in deede they be terrible, yet dare they not set vpon him, otherwise if it were not for this, we should be miserable sheepe, which should forthwith be brought into a lamentable & wretched case. For euen as a shepe can not take heede and foresee to it selfe, that it strap not out of the way, vnlesse it be led of the shepeheard, and when it hath straied and is lost, can not by it selfe come againe to the shepeheard, but must be sought and enquired for of him, vntil he hath found it, and so must be layd vpon his shoulders and brought home againe, lest that it be againe fraied & chased from him, or catcht of the wolfe and rent in peeces: So we also our selues can profite our selues neither by helpe, nor counsell, that we might obtaine peace and quietnes of conscience, and escape out of the handes of the deuill, death, and hell, except Christ him selfe repeate his word vnto vs, and call vs againe vnto him. And although we come vnto him, and nowe stande in faith, yet is it not in our power to keepe our selues therin, or to stand by our owne strength, vnles he eftsoones by the power of his word, hold, lift vp, and carry vs, for that the deuill alwayes imagineth and purposeth deceite and destruction toward vs, and goeth about like a roring Lyon, seeking whome he may deuoure, as S. Peter witnesseth. Wherefore here is no place to boast of free will, or of our owne strength, which is none, neither in beginning any thing, neither in going forward therein, much lesse in perseuering or continuing in it, but Christ our shepeheard alone doth all things.

Howbeit we are sure hereof, that whiles we lye vpon the shoulders of Christ, we shall remaine safe from all terrour and misfortune. For he will not suffer vs to be plucked or taken from his necke, neither will he him selfe cast vs of, being so glad and ioyfull, that he hath found his lost sheepe, and brought it agayne to the rest of the flocke. And in summe, here is no terrour, or trouble, or exaction, but meere life and grace, whereby he handleth his shepe most louingly and gently. But on the contrary Moises, not as a shepeheard of miserable and weake sheepe, but as a Maister of stronger cattell, driueth his heards with a staffe and a rodde three dayes iorney through the desert, vntill they be tyred and wearie with walking: of this shepeheard those hardened and wilde ones are to be tamed and brideled. And we also,

when we shall be vnder Moises, to wit, according to the flesh and the outward life, must goe, and do that which the lawe requireth. But in that we are, and are called Christians, we must by no meanes suffer, that any worke be layed vpon vs, yea or exacted of vs, but must giue our selues onely to Christ to be caried & gently lifted vp, not vpon horses and charrets, but euen vpon his onely shoulders. Which commeth to passe, as I haue sayd, when he suffereth the word to be preached vnto vs, and we also beleue the same, that he dyed for vs, that on the crosse he bare our sinnes in his body, that he hath ouerthrowne the deuill, death, and sinnes, and put them vnder his feete, and hath made and opened vnto vs entrance to eternall life. Wherefore we must not haue respect to our owne life, how righteous and stronge we are, but we must study vpon this one thing, that we may rest lying vpon his shoulders. In this circle we must haue no care of sinne, death, life, or penstuencs, inasmuch as we haue all things to the full in Christ, who beareth and keepeth vs,

Whē Christ carieth vs vpon his shoulders.

Now he is not content with all these thinges, both that with suche great trauell he seeketh his sheepe, and also that hauing found it, he carieth it with incredible ioy, but it being brought againe, he maketh festiual daies, and exceedingly reioyceth, calling togither his neighbours and friendes that they may reioyce with him. Yea he affirmeth, that God also in heauen with the whole heauenly host do reioyce ouer one sinner that repenteth. In which words he sheweth and declareth, who he is, which deserueth to be called his lost sheepe, namely such a sinner, as being led by repentance of his former life, doth amend, most feruently desiring to be deliuered from sinnes, and earnestly endeuouring to come vnto Christ: such a one hath a miserable and troubled, yea and a contrite and humbled hart, and an afflicted conscience, which the deuill by all meanes fighteth against, and so presseth it, that it is almost ouercome with distresses, &c. But Christ assisteth and comforteth him, for he is such a man, as seeketh no sheepe but that which is lost, and can not helpe it selfe.

Exceeding ioy because of the sheepe which was lost and is foūd againe.

How may Christ be preached with greater gentlenes, and more effectuall cōsolation of words? or what thinkest thou should he do more to cheere the mind of a sinner, and to confirme in him a sure confidence toward him selfe? For we see him set forth by him selfe to vs miserable sinners as a most louing shepeheard,

who

who moſt ſorrowfully ſeeketh his ſheepe being loſt, and moſt ioyfully bringeth them againe being found, and taketh ſo great ioy, that with him all the Angels alſo and Saincles doe reioyce ouer vs.

Now he that could firmely beleue theſe thinges, ſhould without doubt through Chriſt receiue true comfort and ioy, forasmuch as here he hath a certaine promiſe, that if he ſurely cleaue vnto Chriſt, and reſt vpon his ſhoulders, he ſhall be an acceptable and welcome gueſt in the kingdom of heauen, and ſhall be receyued with exceeding great ioye. But we being troubled with ſorrowe and anguiſh of conſcience, haue a farre other feeling and affection, when as the hart can thinke nothing elſe, but that all the Angels doe ſtand behind vs with a drawne ſwoorde, which feare ſo troubleth vs, that we can conceiue no cheerefulnes in our minde, neyther of GOD, nor of the Angells. And there are ſome alſo, which can behold no creature with a glad minde, fearing the beholding of the ſunne, yea being ſore afraid at the noyſe of a leafe. All which proceede from hence, for that they trouble and vexe them ſelues with their owne thoughts, out of which they would willingly wraſtle, ſparing no labour, that they might feele that vprightnes and integritie in them, which would be abaſhed with no feare. But if thou be deſirous to conceiue true comfort and ioy in thy hart, then ſee that thou doe diligently and well print and faſten therein this amiable image of the moſt louing ſhepeheard, and the word of the Goſpell, and ſeeke it, where it is to be ſought, that is, in Chriſt and no where elſe: for in this man thou ſhalt finde all thinges, ſo that thou abide in his ſafe cuſtodie and vpon his ſhoulders. But whatſoeuer comfort can be obtained without him, it commeth not from the hart, although thou cal to helpe thee all ỹ creatures, and ſhouldeſt alſo be partaker of the pleaſure and ioy of the whole world.

In Chriſt true ioy is to be found, & without him can be found no true ioy at all.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE WOMAN OF CANAAN.

Matth. 15.

Verse. 21. AND Iesus went thence, and departed into the partes of Tyrus and Sidon.

22. And behold, a woman a Cananit came out of the same coastes, and cryed, saying vnto him, Haue mercy on me, O Lord, the sonne of Dauid: my daughter is miserably vexed with a deuill.

23. But he aunswered her not a word. Then came to him his Disciples & besought him, saying: Send her away, for she cryeth after vs.

24. But he aunswered and sayd: I am not sent but vnto the lost sheepe of the house of Israell.

25. Yet she came & worshipped him, saying, Lord helpe me.

26. And he answered & said, it is not good to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to whelps:

27. But she said, truth Lord: yet in deed the whelps eate of the crommes, which fall from their maisters table.

28. Then Iesus aunswered and sayde vnto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it to thee as thou desirest. And her daughter was made whole at that houre.

IN this text is set forth vnto vs an example of a constant and stedfast faith. For this woman did so persever, that she ouercame three most sharpe conflicts, and notably teacheth vs, what is the qualitie and proper vertue of a true and right faith. Which in deede is a certaine trust, and most deepely setled in the mind, of the diuine goodnes and grace, knowne and made manifest by the worde of God. For Marke mencioneth that she heard the report of Iesus, without dout good and ioyfull, that he is a bountifull man, and maruelous readie to helpe euerie one. That report was good tidings & the worde of grace vnto her, whereupon also this her faith did begin. For vnles she had beleued that she also might be made partaker of Christes bountifulnesse and goodnesse, she would not haue so followed him, or cried after him. Which is that wherof we haue often admonished, & which we are taught Rom. 10. that faith is by hearing. Wherefore the word ought alwayes to goe before, and giue the beginning of saluation. But how came it to passe, whereas many other also heard the same report of our Sauiour Iesus, yet they followed him not, yea they quite despised that report? I aunswere. They that are not sicke, as they haue no neede of the Phisitian, so neither are they desirous of him. But this woman was afflicted and felt her necessitie, yea that report was so ioyfull vnto her, that she being stirred vp thereby, did follow Christ, running after such a pleasant sauour. Cant. 1. Wherfore Moses must alway goe before, who may teache vs to feele sinne, whereby grace may be wished for and desired of vs. It is in vaine therefore, although Christ be preached to be louing, and to be desired and longed for, if a man be not before humbled through knowledge of him selfe, and made desirous of Christ, according to the songe of Marie: The Lorde hath filled the hungrie with good thinges, and the rich he hath sent emptie away. Nowe all these things are witten for the consolation and lifting vp of them which be miserable, poore, needie, oppressed with sinne, and abiects, that they may know to whom they may flie in all distresse, and where they may seeke for helpe and safetie.

Faith what it is.

Faith commeth by hearing.

We must first by the law come to the knowledge & feeling of sinne, before we cā taste howe swete Christ is.

But see howe Christ vrgeth and inflameth faith in them that be his, whereby they may become stronger and more confirmed. For first, whereas this woman being encouraged with that alluring fame of his, goeth after him, and cryeth for helpe, douting

nothing but she should trie him to be such a one, as she had heard him reported to be and that she should forthwith intreate him for the recouerie of her daughter: Christ in all respects sheweth him selfe vnto her so, as though he woulde deceaue all her trust, and make his report false, so that she might thinke with her selfe: Is this that man which is so bountifull and ready to helpe all? Doth he so fulfill the most commendable reporte which goeth of him? Where doth there appeare so much as any thing like vnto those thinges, which men haue tolde me of him? They were deceaued them selues and deceaued me also. He sheweth him selfe an enemie rather then a friend. Why doth he not so much as speake a word, and friendly denie me helpe, if I be vnworthie thereof? He holdeth his peace like vnto a block, and vouchsafeth not to speake a word, neither offereth his help. Here surely Christ gaue a grieuous blow to the minde of the silly woman. So it is an incomparable torment to them that beleue, being in distresse, when God sheweth him selfe such a one at their prayers, like vnto one that is angrie, and whom they pray vnto in vayne, hiding so deepely his grace, that they nowe perceaue nothing else, but that he will not performe those thinges which he hath promised, and that so he will shew his owne wordes to be false. That truely hapned to the Israelites at the redde sea, and to many other excellent holie men. But what doth this woman to these thinges? She remoueth out of her sight & minde, that Christ shewed him selfe so vngentle and hard to be intreated, she being constant and nothing moued hereat, perseuereth in the trust of his goodnes, whereof she had heard, & which she had conceaued in her minde, suffering her selfe in no wise to be turned from it. So also must we do, we must trust vnto the worde alone, although God him selfe and all creatures pretende otherwise then the worde preacheth. But this is thyse most hard to nature & reason, to be so vtterly destitute, and to depende on the worde of God without any feeling of comfort, euen when a man feeleth and trieth all things to be contrary. God giue vnto vs such a minde & faith, that we may so doe, especially at the point of death and in extreme necessities.

The constancie of this woman of Canaan.

We must not ceasse to trust in God, though he seemeth at the first not to heare our prayers, nor to fulfill his promise.

Secondly, whereas the crie and faith of this woman seemeth to haue suffered repulse, the disciples come with their faith, douting not but that they shal entreat the Lord, but when they thinke that they shall make him more easie to be entreated, they find him

to

to be much more harde, repelling as it appeared, and as they thought, the faith and prayers both of the woman & also of them selues. Neither doth Christ here hold his peace, and leaue them in doubt, as before, but he seemeth plainely to denye that which they aske, saying: I am not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. This stroke is much more grieuous then that former, where not onely the person of the intreater is repelled, but al hope also which is wont to be left, is cut of, namely the comfort of the intercession of all the other Sainctes and elect. For it is almost the last refuge to them that suffer distres and feele the indignation of God, to get them selues to godly and holy men: seking for comfort and helpe, whereunto, as charitie requireth, they find them ready and willing, but euen they also some tyme do in vaine aske helpe and succour, for neither are they heard, and so the case of them that be in distres becommeth worse and more lamentable. So the afflicted and desolate may truely obiect vnto Christ all those wordes, wherein he hath promised that he will heare his Sainctes, as: If two of you shall agree in earth vpon any thing whatsoeuer they shall desire, it shall be giuen them of my Father which is in heauen. Againe, Whatsoeuer ye shall aske, beleue, and ye shall receiue it. And many such like. But if to him that obiecteth these things, and aketh him how he can goe from his wordes and promises, he aunswere thus: I goe not from my promises, I haue not promised that I will heare all prayers, but the prayers of them that be myne, which are of the house of Israell, not of all whatsoeuer. What thinkest thou may the hart then thinke hauing taken such a repulse? Such an aunswere is as it were a flash of lightning, wherewith the heart and all trust is seuered and broken in a thousand peeces. For what trust can there be left, whē he heareth that that doth not pertaine vnto him, which because of the word of God he trusted to haue obtained, but vnto others. Here not so much as a word can be left, if one doe according as he feeleth. But what doth this woman? She doth not so fall from hope, she still sticketh to the wordes which she had heard of Christ, albeit he went about by this other repulse as with a certaine force to wrest them out of her hart, she suffereth not her selfe to be fraied away neither wt that vngentle silence, neither with this hard aunswere, she continueth stedfastly in a sure confidence, beleeuing that vnder this difficultye which

Matth. 18. 19.

Marke 11. 24.

The great constancie and faith of this woman of Canaan.

Chriſt did pretend, that grace was as yet hidden and layd vp for her, which ſhe had heard reported of him, ſhe can not be brought as yet to iudge Chriſt not to be bountifull and gracious, and that he can deny the helpe which ſhe deſireth. This was to perſeuere ſtrongly in faith.

Moreouer ſhe followeth Ieſus euen into the houſe, as Marke writeth, ſhe is inſtant vpon him, falleth downe before him, and ſayth: Lord helpe me. Here the Lord giueth a deadly & the laſt blow ſaying vnto her face, that ſhe is a dogge, and vnworthy to be partaker of the bread of the children. What may ſhe aunſwer hereunto? For he ſeemed to ſignifie in theſe wordes that ſhe is of the number of the damned and deſperate, which can looke for no part with the elect. This word ſeemeth eternall and that can not be gaineſayd: For he which doth not pertaine to the company of the elect by the ordinaunce of God, what may he hope to be left for him? This woman is not yet diſcouraged and paſt hope, but yeldeth to this iudgement of the Lord, ſhe confeſſeth of her owne accord, that ſhe is a dogge, neither deſireth ſhe any thing but that which is wont to be giuen to dogges, namely the crummes which fall from their maiſters table. Semeth ſhe not to haue vſed maruelous cunning? She taketh Chriſt in his owne wordes. He had made her like vnto a dogge, ſhe acknowledgeth it, and deſireth that he will onely ſuffer her to be a dogge according to his owne ſaying: what ſhould he here doe? how ſhould he eſcape? he was now as it were euen taken. For the crummes vnder the table are graunted to the dogge, for vnto dogges they are ſayd to be due. Here therefore Chriſt being as it were ouercome, doth open him ſelfe wholy, and graunteth the deſires of the woman, and maketh that ſhe is not now a dogge, but a true Iſraelite.

The frute of conſtant perſeuerance & truſt in Chriſt.

These things are written for the inſtruction and comfort of all vs, whereby we ought to learne, how deepely ſome time Chriſt hideth his grace from vs, and how we muſt not iudge of God according to our owne ſenſe and opinion, but onely according to his wordes. For we ſee here, that albeit Chriſt ſhewed him ſelfe very hard to this woman, yet he did not plainly deny to helpe her, but whatſoeuer he aunſwered, howſoeuer it ſeemed to pretend a deniall, yet was it not a deniall, but did hange in doubt, and left an entraunce for faith, although but ſmall. For he ſayd not at her firſt petition: I will not heare her, but he held his peace, neyther

promiſing

promising nor denying helpe. So to the second petition, which the Apostles made, he sayth not: she is not of the house of Israel, I can not therefore performe that which she desireth, but he onely sayth: I am not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israell, leauing all thinges in doute, and in the middest betwene a plaine graunt and a deniall. So when she had the third time desired him, he sayth not: thou art a dogge, get thee hence, the bread of the children is not due vnto thee, but he sayth: It is not good to take the childrens bread, &c. againe leauing in dout, whether she was a dogge or no. Neuertheles all these sayings doe pretende outwardly rather a deniall of helpe, then prouoke her to hope, but in very deede they did containe in them rather a promise and hope, then a deniall. Yea there was nothing but a promise and a certaine expectation of helpe, (howbeit most deepely hid and altogither secret) vnder that silence and aunswers, although they were hard, and a deniall onely sounded outwardly. By these it is shewed how our hart is wont to be affected in tentation. For according as that feeleth in tentation, so Christ here behaueth him selfe. It feeleth all thinges to be denied, when as it is farre otherwise. Wherfore it is requisite, that leauing his owne feeling, by a sure faith in the word of God it conceiue and hold fast the promise of helpe, deepely hidden vnder the deniall, and yeeld vnto the sentence of God toward vs, as this woman did, so shall we ouercome and take the Lorde in his wordes, that he can not but helpe vs. So that if we feele in our conscience at any time God rebuking vs, pronouncing vs sinners, and vnworthy of the kingdome of heauen, then we feele as it were hell, and it seemeth vnto vs that we are past all hope and recouerie for euer: then if any had the skill of this woman, that he could take the Lord in his owne iudgement and say: yea Lord, I am a sinner, and altogither vnworthy of thy grace, but thou hast promised forgiuenes to sinners, neither didst thou come to call the righteous, but as Paule sayth, to saue sinners: he truely shoulde bringe to passe that the Lorde should be enforced, euen by his owne iudgement to haue mercy vpoon him. So did Manasses, when being penitēt he prayed for pardon, as we read in his prayer: He yeelded to the iudgement of God, acknowledging him selfe a most grieuous sinner, and so he bound God with his promise, which had promised forgiuenes of sinne to sinners, not to the righteous. The same also

When God pronoūceth vs sinners, we ought to acknowledge and confesse our sinnes, & pray for mercie, which God hath promised to them that be penitent for their sinnes.

did Dauid obſerue Pſal. 51: Againſt thee onely, ſayth he, haue I ſinned, and done this euill in thy ſight, that thou mighteſt be iuſtified in thy ſaying, and found pure when thou art iudged. For that doth purchaſe vnto vs all diſpleaſure, that we diſdayne to ſuffer the iudgement of the Lorde, and doe againſt our wills yeelde vnto his ſentence, when he pronounceth vs ſinners. Such a great thing is it to acknowledge ſinnes, and to embrace the iudgement of God. We all confeſſe our ſelues ſinners in words, but as ſoone as the Lorde ſpeaketh that in our hart, and pronounceth vs ſinners, we doe not abide by that which before we confeſſed, we had leuer be counted righteous and free from that iudgement. But it muſt needes be, if God muſt be iuſt in his wordes, that thou be a ſinner, then alſo maiſt thou vſe the right of ſinners, which God him ſelfe hath giuen vnto them, namely to pray with a ſure expectation of forgiuenes of ſinnes. Then is it not permitted vnto thee onely to feede vnder the table of crummes after the maner of dogges, but being a child of the houſhold, thou ſhalt ſit at the verie table, hauing God nowe howe great ſoeuer he be, giuen vnto thee according to thy deſire. Hereof alſo we haue an hiſtoricall expoſition of this text according to ỹ allegories. For as it chaunceth to this woman her daughter being ſicke, for whom through faith ſhe obtayned health by a miracle: ſo alſo falleth it out with vs, when we are deliured from ỹ ſpirituall ſickenes to wit ſinnes, whice truely are a moſt grieuous and troubleſome Deuill vnto vs. For as ſhe acknowledged her ſelfe a dogge, ſo muſt we acknowledge our ſelues ſinners and iudged vnto hel, the Lord pronouncing it, which if we can doe as ſhe coulde, we ſhall be ſafe. We haue alreadie ſpoken elſewhere of other thinges, whereof there might be occaſion to ſpeake out of this text, as howe one may obtaine grace and ſafetie by the faith of an other, as here it fell out to the daugher of this woman. This thinge alſo (that Chriſt, his Diſciples, and the woman are here examples of loue, foraſmuch as none of them pray for, ſeeke or doe thoſe thinges that are their owne, but euery one that which is an others) is very manifeſt by it ſelfe, and eaſily acknowledged of euery one, eſpecially ſeeing that we haue ſo largely entreated hereof in an other place.

Chriſt, the diſciples, and the woman in this place are exãples of loue.

A

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHERIN IS TAVGHT THAT WE ARE SAVED freely by grace, without the workes and merits of men.

Tit. 3.

Verse. 4. WHen that bountifulnes & that loue of God our Sauiour towarde men appeared.

5 Not by the workes of righteousnes, which we had done, but according to his mercie he saued vs, by the washing of the newe birth, and the renuing of the holy Ghost,

6 Which he shed on vs aboundantly, through Iesus Christ our Sauiour,

7 That we being iustified by his grace, should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life.

PAVLE hauing willed before that all shoulde be put in minde to be obedient to such as be in authoritie, and ready to euery good worke, to speake euill of no man, to be no fighters, but gentle, shewing all meekenes vnto all men, &c. these fewe wordes being put betweene, that we our selues were in times past vnwise disobedient, deceiued, seruing diuers lustes and voluptuousnes, &c: he added those wordes which we haue already mentioned, as if he should say: Wherefore should it greiue vs to deserue so well of all men, when as God hath before dealt so bountifully, kindely, and gently with vs, with whom without comparison, we

A most weighty cause to moue vs to

doe good to our neighbours.

are leſſe and haue leſſe of him deſerued, then any being compared to vs can be, or can deſerue of vs? As therefore God hath with exceeding bountifulnes and kindenes moſt gently behaued him ſelfe toward vs, of his mercy graunting and geuing vnto vs all thinges: ſo ought we to doe all thinges with all charitie and good will toward our neighbours, albeit they haue otherwiſe deſerued, forasmuch as we were like vnto them, ſubiect to all ſinnes and euill deſires. Here we ſee how the Apoſtle will haue vs to be affected towards men: He will haue vs ſubiect to them that be in

How we muſt behaue our ſelues toward men.

authoritie, kinde vnto others, and readie to doe well vnto them with all gentlenes, although they be euill, blinde, and in errour, that we grudge not to beare theſe thinges, and as much as lyeth in vs, endeuour to doe them good, taking all things in good part, conſidering that God hath ſo dealt with vs, when we were euill and wicked, like vnto them.

This word, appeared, we haue elſewhere declared to ſignifie the reuelation of the Goſpell, whereby Chriſt appeared in the world: Albeit the vnskilfulnes of Miniſters hath wreſted it to the carnall natiuitie of Chriſt. He vſeth not here the word grace,

Tit. 2.11.

which he vſeth before, but hath ſet in ſteed therof two other words of maruelous comfort, [bountifulnes, and loue towards men] which he attributeth to our God. The firſt is called of the Greci-

Bountifulnes

ans Chreſtotes, and is that kindnes, gentlenes and ſweetenes of conditions, wherewith they that be endued, with them all of vs are with pleaſure conuerſant, & maruelouſly delighted with their companie, ſo that they doe with this their gentlenes and kindnes allure & greatly prouoke all men to loue them. For ſuch can ſuffer all without griefe: they contemne no man: they repell or put none from them with bitter, hard, and diſordered conditions: acceſſe vnto them is not hard, but they are ſo open, and ready for al, that euery one dare reſort vnto them, and deſire their helpe. And to conclude: they are ſuch men as the Goſpells deſcribe Chriſt vnto vs, whom they declare to be gentle to all, a deſpiſer of none, which denieth no benefit to any, pliant, prepared and ready to do good to all. So God alſo by the Goſpell is preached and offered vnto vs wholy good, bountiful and ſweete, open to all, reiecting none, bearing all our ſinnes and offences, repelling no man from him with exceſſiue ſeueritie. For we read and heare nothing to be declared in the Goſpell but meere grace, and meere goodnes,

where-

whereby he doth moſt mercifully beare vs, & moſt gently handle vs, and not any man accoꝛding to his deſerts. This is the time of grace, wherein it is graunted to all to goe with great boldnes vnto the thꝛone of grace, as it is written Heb. 4. and Pſal. 34. Come vnto him, and be enlightened, and your faces ſhall not be aſhamed, that is, he will not ſuffer you to pꝛay and come in vaine, neither to returne with confuſion being fruſtrate.

The other woꝛd is Philanthropia, loue of men, as couetouſnes may be called loue of money, as Dauid 2. Sam. 1. calleth the deſire of women, the loue of women. And the Philoſophers cal certaine liuing creatures Philanthropa, that is louing toward men, as are horſes, dogges, dolphins. Foꝛ theſe creatures are by nature delighted with man, they deſire his company, & do willingly ſerue him as though they were moued with ſome reaſon & ſenſe of humanity. This name, & ſuch loue the Apoſtle here attributeth to our God, which Moſes alſo did befoꝛe him, Deut. 33. where he ſpeaketh thus of God: The Lord appeared hauing in his right hand a law of fire, and he loued the people. The meaning theꝛefoꝛe of the Apoſtle is this: Our God hath in the Goſpell ſhewed him ſelfe vnto vs not onely bountifull, kind, gentle, and ſweete, which can beare, and will receiue all, but alſo he ſo loueth vs, that of his owne accoꝛd he adioyneth him ſelfe vnto vs, ſeketh to haue to doe with vs, voluntarily ſheweth and offereth his grace and bountifulnes vnto vs, and moſt gently embꝛaſeth as many as only do not refuſe his grace and loue, and deſire to dꝛawe nie vnto him. What ſhould he doe more? Who can not ſee hereby, why we count the Goſpell a pꝛeaching, ioyfull and full of all conſolation of God in Chꝛiſt? Foꝛ what can be ſpoken moꝛe louingly and ſweetely to a ſinnefull and afflicted conſcience, then theſe woꝛdes? O lamentable caſe, how miſerably hath Satan by the lawes of his Pope oppꝛeſſed and obſcured this ſouereigne ſyncꝛitie of the woꝛd of God.

Loue toward men.

Now let no man reſtraine theſe two woꝛdes [Bountifulnes, & loue toward men] to the perſons, foꝛ God is plainly without reſpect of perſons bountifull to all, and a louer of all, otherwiſe if we ſhould here make a difference betwene men, we ſhoulde acknowledge that ſome thing is receaued thꝛough our merits, and not all thinges thꝛough his mercy. Where it muſt be well marked, that God is ſayd to be a louer of men, not of this oꝛ that na-

No reſpect of perſons with God.

ture onely, not held with loue of the person, and therefore these two, bountifulnes and loue toward men, must be taken after a generall sort, that in all thinges the chiefe praise may be attributed to his mercy, that no man trust in his owne merits, neither be terrified with sinnes, but that all together doe trust to his grace, which he voluntarely offereth vnto vs with so great kindnes and loue toward vs. For if any respect of person might be had here, it should surely be had of them, which are rich in the works of righteousnes, but Paul expressely reiecteth these, saying: Not by the workes of righteousnes which we had done. Howe much lesse then shall this bountifulnes and loue of our God toward men appeare because of any mans wisedome, power, nobilitie, riches or any such thing, when as no respect is had of works of righteousnes? Great is the grace of God toward vs, which appeareth in the Gospel, yea and nothing but grace, which admitteth no merit at all of ours, vtterly taketh away all boasting and glorying, and setteth forth the glory of God alone, who freely giueth it vnto vs being vnworthy. So in this text these two, faith and loue, are taught to receiue benefites of God, and bestow them on our neighbours, which the Scripture doth very often repeat, so that euen the doctrine of saluation consisteth wholy in them, neither can one be separated from the other. For he that doth not firmely trust in the diuine grace, can not but be remisse and slow to do well to his neighbour, and so witnes the faintnes and weakenes of faith, which is the fountaine of all duties and benefites: As contrariwise the stronger faith that one is indued with, so much more dutifully and with readier minde he endeuoreth to deserue well of his neighbours.

The doctrin of our salua. tion consisteth in faith and loue

All both doctrine and life worthy of Christ, (that all thinges may be declared most briefly, manifestly and sufficiently (consist of these two, faith and loue. Whereby man is made as it were a meane betwene God and his neighbour, that he may receaue of God from aboue, and may giue to his neighbours beneath, & be as it were a conduit pipe, through which the fountaine of the diuine goodnes doth continually flow to his neighbours. And such men are like vnto god, which in Christ receiue of God whatsoeuer he hath, and doe againe by their good deedes declare themselues as it were the gods of other, and fulfill the prophecie of the Prophet Psalme 82. I haue sayde, ye are gods, and

By faith and loue man is made as it were a meane be twene God & his neighbours.

ye

ye all are children of the moſt high. We are children of the moſt high by faith, whereby of nothing we are made the heires of God. And we are gods by loue, which maketh vs beneficiall to our neighbour: forasmuch as the nature of God is nothinge but bountifulnes, and Paule here saith: the bountifulnes and loue of God toward men, which he doth with incomparable plentie daily poure forth vpon euerie one, as we see. We muſt onely indeuour, that euerie one doe nothing doubt that theſe thinges are ſpoken to him, that the bountifulnes and loue of God to manward is reuealed and offered to euerie one, that by theſe wordes he may eſtabliſh, exerciſe, and ſtrengthen his faith, being certaine that they are moſt true, and that God both vndoutedly is, and alwayes will be bountifull and louing toward him. If thou canſt beleue this, it will aſſuredly ſo come vnto thee: thou mayeſt then with a full confidence pray and deſire of him whatſoeuer thou wilt, and complaine vnto him of whatſoeuer doth grieue thee or other. But if thou want this faith, it had bene better for thee neuer to haue heard any thing hereof, for that by thy infidelitie thou reproueſt of falſhood theſe wordes ſo precious and full of conſolation and grace making ſo light account of them, as not beleeuing that they be true. Which ſurely is a great contempt and diſhonour of God, that ſcarce a more grieuous ſinne can be committed of thee. Contrariwiſe if thou be endued with this faith, it can not be, but that thy hart being therby cheered, ſhould euen as it were laugh & leape for holy ioy in God, being voide of all care and trouble, and be made aboue meaſure confident. For how can any diſcouragement, any whit of ſorrowe remayne in that heart, which douteth not that God is gracious and bountiful vnto it, and beareth a ſingular affection of loue toward it, that it is a delight and pleaſure vnto him to doe it good, & enioy it as a frend? Surely the hart is neceſſarily delighted with this ſpirituall ioy & pleaſure, or vndoutedly it wanteth faith. Paule in the Epiſtle to the Galathians calleth this, to receiue the holy Ghoſt by the Goſpel. For the Goſpell is ſo pleaſant a preaching of the grace & goodnes of God, that while it is preached & heard, it bringeth the holy Ghoſt with it, no otherwiſe then the beames of the ſunne doe naturally bring heat with them.

The meanes to be partaker of the bountifulnes and loue of God is to beleue.

How could the Apoſtle vſe more pleaſaunt and ſweete wordes? I dare ſay that I haue in the whole Scripture redde none more

pleasaunt, and so sweete words of the grace of God, as these two, Chrestotes, & Philanthropia, that is, bountifulnes, and loue toward men, in which ý grace of God is so described, as wherby he doth not onely forgiue our sinnes, but doth also desire to be conuersaunt with vs, and is readie to doe the part of a verie frend toward vs, voluntarily offering him selfe to helpe vs in all things, also to bestow more benefites vpon vs then we can desire or aske, that we may presume of him no otherwise then of a most neare & familiar frend, of whom we may obtayne all thinges, in whose eyes we are most deare, and euen delightfull. Thinke in thy minde of a most perfect frend, which hath fulfilled all the partes of frendship toward thee, & thou shalt haue after a sorte a forme, although yet farre vnlike, of the diuine goodnesse and kindnesse, which is here attributed to our God, by the name of bountifulnesse and loue toward men. But when thou hast a sounde faith in this bountifulnes and loue to manward, and thereby doest liue in thy God, so bountifull, gracious, and gentle to thee, reioycest, and art full of all good thinges, being certayne of his continuall grace, what shouldest thou doe any longer in earth? what in this life?

How louing God is toward vs.

Thou canst not in this case be idle, as surely that loue of God and pleasure which thou enioyest in him will not suffer thee to be idle. Thou shalt be enflamed with a maruelous studie and desire to doe what things soeuer thou canst know will be an honour vnto thy God, so louing and bountifull vnto thee, and will turne to praise, glorie, and thankes giuing vnto him. Thou shalt haue no choise of works, thou shalt passe for no precept, thou shalt feele no compulsion of the lawe, hauing a most readie will and pleasure to doe, whatsoeuer thinges thou shalt knowe to be acceptable vnto God, whether they be contemptible or noble, small or great, thou shalt count them alike. But first of all it shall be thy desire, that this blessed knowledge of God may be common also to the rest, whereupon by and by thy loue will here shewe it selfe, and will assay all meanes, to make this truth of saluation manifest vnto all, it will publish and repeate it, whersoeuer it shall be able, reiecting and condemning whatsoeuer other either teach or say, that agreeth not with this truth. Whereby it will come to passe, that Satan & the worlde, which heare nothing so vnwillinglie as this truth, & can not abide that their things should be condemned, wil

He that is partaker of the bountifulnes and loue of God can not be idle.

Satan & the world can not abide falshood to

rise

rise against thee with all their might, will by and by trouble thee, all the great, learned, rich & mighty of the world will condemne thee of heresie and madnes, and will leaue no meane vnattempted vntill if they be able they haue dispatcht thee of thy life. Thus with Christ thy Lord thou shalt be persecuted, and suffer extreme ignominie, thy body, life, goods, name, friendes, and all thinges being brought into perill, vntill they haue thrust thee from them out of this life into the eternall and blessed life: In the meane season thou must suffer all these things with a patient mind, and take them in good part, losing none of the spirituall ioy, which thou hast of Christ in thy God, & for thy part shewing to thy persecutors all kindnes & loue, being alwaies mindfull, that thou a litle before was not much vnlike them before God. All which thinges thou shalt do through faith & loue, albeit they excede the strength of nature. And this in deede is a true Christian life, wherein thou doest endeuour to doe so to other, as God hath done to thee.

be reproued & the truth to be preached, & therfore they persecute them which preach the truth.

Not by the workes of righteousnes which we had done. In these wordes the Apostle signifieth that which we haue now said, and proueth it as it were by rendring a reason. For if the bountifulnes and loue of God to manward hath appeared, and he hath saued vs of his mercy, and not because of our owne righteousnes, yea we being by all meanes vnworthy, and subiect to innumerable sinnes, it is meete that we also doe good to them that haue not deserued so much of vs, and are vnworthy thereof. For we which are become the sonnes of God, must resemble God our father, and bestow benefits according to our abilitie as well vpon our enemies and persecutours, as vpon our friendes and them that do good vnto vs. Whereof Christ also hath admonished vs *Matt. 5.* Loue your enemies, that ye may be the children of your father which is in heauen, who maketh his sunne to shine vpon the good & euil, & sendeth raine on the iust & vniust. For if ye loue them which loue you, what reward shall ye haue? when as euen the heathen & Publicans doe the same. Now the Apostle doth not onely expressely condemne vs for euill workes, but sayth: Not by the workes of righteousnes, or, which we haue done in righteousnes. Where he also reiecteth those workes, which we counted righteous, & were thought both of vs & others to haue bene done in righteousnes, whē as they were so farre from being righteous, that they made vs more vnworthy of the grace of God, and

We must do well vnto men, yea euen though they haue not so deserued of vs.

more vnfit to receiue it, for they are deceitfull workes, whereunto we adde this sinne, that we thinke them righteous, and trust in them, whereby God is prouoked to anger more then can be sayd, euen as our enemies are wont to moue vs to anger, when as they will auouch those thinges to be iust, wherein they sinne and doe vniustly. But euen as God, when we being vnwise, by errour moued him to anger, counting our sinnes workes of righteousnes, did not therefore reiect vs, but of his meere mercye deliuered vs from this errour and sinnes: so we neglecting the foolishnes and dotage of our aduersaries, whereby they contend that sinnes are to be counted for righteousnes, ought neuertheless of meere loue, hauing no respect of euill or good desertes, to be beneficiall vnto them, and endeuour to doe them good in all thinges, looking for fruite of our benefites not of them, but of God alone. Let these thinges suffice to haue bene spoken for a compendious and generall exposition of this text.

We ought to be beneficiall to others of mere loue hauing no respect to good or euil deserts.

Nowe let vs also briefly wey the wordes, wherein he setteth forth and commendeth the grace of God. First he so greatly extolleth it, that in respect of it he condemneth all our good workes and righteousnes: neither doth he condemne a small thing, when he condemneth our righteousnes or righteous workes, the most excellent thing that man can haue in earth. For if all men with all their might should labour and endeuour to attaine to most exact prudence, wisedom, and libertie of mind and will, which we reade that some Philosophers and Princes haue done, as Socrates, Traianus, and many other, whose fame the whole world hath long since spread abroad both by wordes and writings: neuertheles all such wisedome, and all such vertues are nothing but sinnes before God, forasmuch as they be not done in and by the grace of God. Doers of such vertues are ignorant of God, and therfore they can not honour him by their studies and endeuours, they thinke they haue all thinges of them selues, when as no man can haue any good thing at all, but of this grace alone, which the Gospell preacheth. So Paule glorieth, that he, before he knewe Christ, liued a blameless life, and was more zealous toward the lawe then those of his age, that he also thought, that he did a thinge acceptable to God by persecuting the Christians, which condemned that blameles life which he led, but afterward when he had learned Christ, he sayth, that he counteth that righ-

The good workes and righteousnes of men how they are esteemed of.

teousnes

teousnes to be but dounge, that he might be founde not in such righteousnes, but in Christ by faith. *Philip. 3.* The same thing he witnesseth and entreateth of at large in the Epistles to the Galathians and Colossians. Here therefore is condemned all boasting of free will, mans strength, righteousnes, and good workes, and it is concluded, that they are all nothing but sinnes, and certaine destruction, although they haue a fayre shew: that they are saued by the onely grace of God, as many of vs as beleeue, and call for it, with acknowledging of our owne vanitie and perdition.

Now we must accustom our selues to the Scripture, which maketh mention of two sorts of righteousnes, one humane, which Paule here and in many other places hath mentioned, the other diuine, euen that grace of saluation, which iustifieth vs by faith, whereof he speaketh in the ende of this text: That being iustified by grace, we should be heires of eternall life. Here thou seest plainly that the grace of God is our true righteousnes, whereby we are iustified, which is therfore called ỹ righteousnes of God, for that it is giuen vnto vs of God, and is made ours, when we are made partakers thereof by faith. Of this he speaketh also *Rom. 1:* In the Gospell is reuealed the righteousnes of God from faith to faith, as it is written: The iust shall liue by faith. And *Gen 15.* Abraham beleued, and it was counted to him for righteousnes. Whereupon the Scripture concludeth, that no man is counted righteous before God, but he that beleueth, as the Apostle testifieth, where he reciteth that saying of Abacuc: The iust shall liue by faith. So it appeareth that faith, grace, mercie, truth, righteousnes, that all these are that same which God worketh in vs by Christ and the Gospell. Whereupon it is sayd *Psal. 25.* All the wayes of the Lord are mercie and truth. For those are the wayes of the Lord in which we obseruing his commaundements, doe walke, and be agayne in vs, now those wayes must be directed by his mercie and truth alone, not by our strength and industrie, forasmuch as our wayes being ordered hereby, are nothing but vanitie before God, and doe deserue his wrath. According to that which the Lord sayth Esai 55. As farre as the heauen is higher thē the earth, so farre do my waies exceede yours. As if he should say: Your righteousnes is earthly and of no value, wherefore ye must bid it farewell and walke

Two sortes of righteousnes.

Diuine righteousnes whereby we are iustified.

in myne, if ye hope for ſaluation.

But according to his mercy he ſaued vs. It is maruell howe the credit of theſe wordes can ſtand, wherein the Apoſtle affirmeth that we are already ſaued, although liuing yet in earth, and therefore in continuall miſerie. But he did ſo ſpeake, that he might more fully expreſſe the power of the diuine grace, and the nature of faith againſt hypocrites, who as though ſaluation were yet farre of, doe in vaine endeuour to get and obtaine it by their workes. For Chriſt hath already ſaued vs: he hath performed all thinges which are required hereunto, that we may be ſaued: he hath ouercome and ſubdued ſinne, death, hell, &c. ſo that he hath left nothing, for any man to care for, he hath alſo giuen all theſe things vnto vs in Baptiſme, that whoſoeuer beleeueth in Chriſt, that he hath performed them, hath them together in the ſame moment, ſo that he hath neede of nothing more vnto ſaluation, but faith alone, that he may firmely beleeue that theſe thinges are ſo performed. But marke how incomparable riches of his grace God hath poured vpon vs in Baptiſme, who hath deliuered vs euen from thoſe workes, whereby thoſe fooliſh holy ones goe about to merit heauen, and to be ſaued. For we muſt haue heauen, and be ſaued before we can do any good workes, for that workes can not merit heauen, but heauen being before giuen of meere grace, cauſeth vs to doe good workes, and that for no hope of merit or reward, but onely to the commoditie of our neighbours, and the glory of God, vntill this body alſo be deliuered from ſinne and death.

We are already ſaued by Chriſt.

What the life of a Chriſtian is after baptiſme.

Wherefore all the life of a Chriſtian after Baptiſme is nothing els, but an expectation of ſaluation and felicitie to be reuealed, which they that beleeue in Chriſt doe nowe poſſeſſe, although hidden. They haue all thinges nowe certainely, but they are yet hid in faith, which when as it is chaunged, knowledge being reuealed, all thinges as they now haue them, ſhall appeare, which ſhall come to paſſe, when pleaſaunt and wiſhed death commeth, according to that ſaying of Iohn: Dearely beloued, nowe are we the ſonnes of God, and yet it doth not appeare what we ſhall be: But we know that when he ſhall appeare, we ſhall be like him. And euery man that hath this hope in him, purgeth him ſelfe, euen as he is pure. Wherefore ſuffer not thy ſelfe to be deceiued, and to be ſeduced from this truth by

1. *Iohn.* 3. 2.

those

those hypocrites, which contemning faith, do falsely affirme that saluation is farre from thee, and teach thee to endeuour in vaine to attaine vnto it by thy workes. It is in thy selfe, if thou beleeue that all thinges are perfourmed by Christ, euen as he him selfe witnesseth: The kingdom of God is within you, Luke. 17. So that all our life after Baptisme ought to be nothing else but an expectation that that shoulde be reuealed which is alreadie in vs, and that we may comprehend, as we are comprehended, as Paul sayeth Philip. 3. I followe if that I may comprehende that, for whose sake also I am comprehended of Christ, that is, that I may at length see those thinges which are giuen me, being as yet in the shut closet of faith. He coueteth, and burneth with desire to see the treasure which by faith he receiued both giuen and sealed in Baptisme. Whereupon he addeth in the same place: Our conuersation is in heauen, from whence also we looke for our Sauiour Iesus Christ, who shall chaunge our vile bodie, that it may be fashioned like vnto his glorious bodie. Herewith also agreeth that which he saith Gal. 4: Ye know God, and by and by he doth as it were correct that which he had sayd, Yea, sayth he, rather are ye knowen, both which are true, although not after the like sort: We are now knowen of God, so that he comprehendeth vs, and we in deede know God, but we doe not yet comprehende, for that our knowledge is as yet hidden and closed vp in fayth. He sayth moreouer Rom. 8: We are saued by hope, that is, we are saued, although we ye see it not, for that which one seeth, he hopeth not for, but if we hope for those thinges which we see not, we doe with pacience abide for them. Christ confirmeth this Luke 12: Let your loines be gird about, and your lightes burning, and ye your selues like vnto men that wait for their maister, when he will returne from the wedding, that whē he commeth, and knocketh, they may open vnto him immediatly. In which wordes he onely biddeth them that be his to be readie to looke for him the bridegrome, as which are alreadie saued being admitted into the number of his ministers. Hereunto also pertaineth that which the Apostle sayeth Tit. 2: Let vs liue soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and appearing of the glorie of that mightie God, and of our Sauiour Iesus Christ. In these and such like places whereof thou maist reade many here and there in the

holy Scriptures, he witnesseth that we are alreadie saued, and that it doth not behoue, that a Christian man should first seeke to attaine to saluation by his workes. This opinion and deuilish doctrine blindeth the eyes of Christians, extinguisheth the knowledge of faith, and carieth men from the way of truth and saluation. We must cleaue vnto that which the Apostle here sayeth: He hath saued vs according to his mercie, and that which he addeth in the ende of this text, that we are heires according to the hope of eternall life. We are nowe heires, but that is hidden in fayth, but we looke with a certaine hope, that hereafter it shalbe reuealed. And God will haue vs so to looke for the reuelation of this inheritance, and to liue a certaine time after Baptisme, that he may chastise our body by our ministery, and declare the power of his grace in fight against the flesh, the world and the deuil, but especially for this cause, that by vs he may help our neighbours, and both by doctrine, and also by our life which he liueth in vs, may bring them to the communion of faith. And albeit he can doe this by Angells, yet it pleaseth him rather that it should be done by vs men, that both the maner of faith may be the better knowē, and that all thinges may be done sweetely & louingly. For if Angells should alwayes haue to doe with vs, there shoulde not be so much fayth, neither shoulde it be so pleasaunt, as when we are taught & guided by them that are partakers of our nature, whom we doe better know, and with whom we do more familiarly associate our selues. And so, that there may be some, by whom other also may be conuerted both by doctrine, and good examples, it is not meete that we should by and by after Baptisme be taken into heauen, wherein notwithstanding we are alreadie admitted citizens.

Why God will haue vs to looke for the reuelatiō of our inheritance a certaine time.

Hereupon if one weye all thinges rightly, it can not be douted, that it is a practise and miracle of Satan and Antichrist, that so much is spent for purgatories sake, such faith as this being put quite out of mens mindes. For men are taught by their workes to saue them selues from Purgatorie, or at the least to deliuer them selues out from thence, as though saluation were not yet giuen vs, and it were necessarie to come vnto it by other meanes then by fayth alone, which howe it disagreeth with the Scripture and a Christian life, there is no man that doth not see, but he that seeth nothing in the Scripture. For thus the holy

A practise of Satan & Antichrist to delude mē with Purgatorie.

holy Scriptures do teach euerie where, that who ſoeuer doth not receaue ſaluation by meere grace, through fayth before all workes, he ſhall neuer be partaker therof. And that whoſoeuer referre their good workes, not to the profite of their neighbours but to their owne commoditie, being more carefull of their owne ſaluation then of their neighbours, haue no good workes at all. All the workes of theſe are voide of faith, and infected with pernitious error. It had bin greatly to be wiſhed that Purgatorie had neuer bin inuented, and neuer mention made thereof in the pulpit, for it hath bin ſuch cauſe of hinderance to Chriſtian veritie and ſincere truth, as can not be recouered. For we ſee it now brought to paſſe by the meanes of Satan, that almoſt al prayers are directed to onely Purgatorie, with this vngodly and peſtilent opinion, whereby miſerable men thinke that they ſhalbe redeemed from thence, and obtaine ſaluation by the workes of men. Whereby the riches of Baptiſme and fayth are had in no reputatiõ, and they at the laſt of Chriſtians become Heathen. O moſt pernitious abomination. Chriſtians ſhould be taught as Chriſt and Paule teach them, that after Baptiſme and abſolution from ſynne they ſhould ſo liue, that they ſhould be ready euery houre to receiue death, with deſire looking for the reuelation of ſaluation already receaued. Now by the opinion of Purgatorie they are made ſecure and ſlouthfull, ſo that they differre the ſtudy of godlines euen to their death, and thinke by contrition and confeſſion they ſhall amend all things, as though there were ſome ſynnes remaining for which they muſt go into Purgatorie, they hope that by maſſes for the departed, and other bequeſts that they are perſuaded to make in their teſtamẽts or laſt willes, they ſhalbe redemed out of purgatorie, but theſe miſerable men are in theſe things vtterly deceiued, and ſhal at length trie them to be farre otherwiſe.

By the waſhing of the new birth. He ſetteth forth the grace of God giuen to vs in Baptiſme, with wordes very full of praiſe and commendation. He calleth Baptiſme a waſhing, whereby not the feete and handes, but the whole man is at once waſhed, purified and ſaued, ſo that to the ſumme and inheritaunce of ſaluation there is neede of nothing but onely fayth in this grace of God, that it may remaine and be acknowledged the worke of grace alone, that we are ſaued without all our workes and me-

rites, and so also there may remaine in vs pure loue, praise, giuing of thankes, and glorie of the diuine mercie, without all glorie and pleasing of our selues in our owne strength and endeuour, as it hath bin already sayd often and at large. Humaine righteousnes is also a washing, but not whereby the whole man is so washed, but that Phariſaicall washing, whereby onely the apparell and vessells which are outward, are made cleane, whereof it is spoken Matth. 23. Whereby it commeth to passe that men seeme vnto them selues pure, but inwardly neuerthales they remaine ful of filthines. Therefore he called Baptisme not a corporall or outward washing, but the washing of regeneration or new birth, by which not those thinges that are outward, are washed, and onely the outward man made cleane, but the whole nature of man is altered and chaunged into an other nature, that is, the carnall natiuitie is thereby destroyed, with all the inheritance of synnes and perdition. Whereby he againe witnesseth, that our saluation is giuen vs at once, so that it is not to be gotten by workes. For not one or two members are wont to be borne, as the handes or feete, but the whole man, which can not worke this that he may be borne a man, but is first borne that he may worke: Likewise our workes doe not purifie or saue vs, but when as before we are pure, iustified, and saued, we worke freely those thinges, which may be profit to our neighbour, and honour to God. And this is the simple and pure knowledge of the diuine grace, whereby a man learneth to knowe both God and himselfe: to praise God alone, to humble and cast downe himselfe: to trust in God, to despeire of himselfe. This doctrine of saluation they marueilously hinder, which vrge men with lawes, precepts, and workes, and teach them to seeke therby to be saued.

Baptisme what maner of washing it is.

Saluation cõmeth not by workes

And the renewing. That this washing and new birth may be more fully vnderstood, he hath added, the renewing, that thou maiest vnderstand, that he that is truly baptized, is become a new man, and a new creature, endued with a new disposition, which now is farre otherwise affected, loueth, liueth, speaketh and doth farre otherwise, thē he was wont or could before. So the Apostle sayth, Gal. 6. In Christ neither circumcision auaileth any thing, nor vncircumcision, that is, no workes of the Lawe are of any value or importance, but a new creature. As if he should say: Saluatiõ can not be perfected by ioyning togither certaine good workes,

He that is truely baptized is becõe a new creature.

wozkes, but the whole man must be at once renewed, and his nature chaũged, whereupon true good wozkes will follow of themselues, not by peecemeale, but togither with greate plentie. Of this new birth, whereby the whole man is renewed, Christ speaketh Joh. 3. He that is not borne againe, can not see the kingdome of God. Here againe it manifestly appeareth, that nothing is here done by our wozkes, but that it behoueth, that man, how great soeuer he be, must die, and be chaunged into an other, which is done in Baptisme, if we beleue. The condemned also shalbe bozne againe in the last day, but they shal not be renewed, they shall remaine vncleane, as they were here, and as they were bozne of Adam. Therefoze that he might speake rightly of Baptisme, he calleth it the washing of the new birth, whereby they that are bozne againe qre also renewed. Of this new birth many things are to be found here and there in the Scripture, because of which God calleth his wozde and Gospell a wombe and matrix, as Esai 46. Hearken all ye that remaine of the house of Israell, whom I haue bozne in my wombe, as mothers are wont to speake of their childzen. He therefoze that beleueth the Gospell, is as it were conceiued in the wombe of God, & from thence bozne a new man, and like vnto God: Whereof we wil in an other place speake moze. Now it shalbe sufficient, to haue learned by these wozds, how our wozkes are nothing in fulfilling the cõmaundements of God, and that it is a mad thinge to attribute here neuer so litle to our owne strength, seeing that it is fayth alone, whereby man is at once bozne againe, & renewed. Therefoze vnderstand this, that good wozkes must folow a new creature, but to attaine vnto righteousnes, & that new creature they are able to helpe nothing at all.

The cõdemned shalbe borne again, but not renewed.

No otherwise is the grace of God wont to renewe man, then as if God should turne some dzie & withered blocke into a new, greene, and flozishing tree, which may afterward bzing fozth frute plentifully. Foz the grace of God is a great, strong, verie mightie, and meruelous effectuall thing, it lieth not in the minde, as the Schoolemen dzeamed: it sleepeth not, oz is bozne, as a painted table beareth a picture: it selfe beareth, guideth, bzigeth, dzaweth, chaungeth, and wozketh all thinges in men, so, that euery one may feele and haue experience of it. It selfe in deede is hyd, but the wozkes of it can not be hyd, but do witnes of it, as

How the grace of God reneweth man.

The grace of God exceeding effectual & mightie in operation.

the leaues and frutes do of the tree, of what nature it is. Wherefore the Scholemen Thomas and Scotus do vngodlily detract from it, who attribute no more vnto it, then that it doth adorne the workes of nature, and is a helpe that they be brought to perfection. For it doth not adorne or helpe onely, but it alone worketh those thinges that be good, neither doth it worke them onely, but doth rather chaunge and renew the person. For it exhibiteth the washing of the new birth, and of renewing, not of workes onely, but much rather of the whole man. He that shall preach these thinges of grace, shall truly and fully commend it. Which Paul endeuored to do when he said: He hath saued vs by the washing of the new birth, and renewing of the holy Ghost. Nothing can be done here by ioyning of workes together, the nature must needes be chaunged, whereupon it cõmeth to passe, that they that truely beleeue must suffer many thinges: for grace worketh in them, & declareth it selfe present. Hereunto pertaineth that saying of the 111. Psal. The workes of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that haue pleasure therein. What are these workes? We are they, by grace in Baptisme made the great, new, and regenerate workes of God. Is it not a great thing for a man by and by to be saued, and deliuered from synnes, death, and hell? therfore he sayth sought out of all them that haue pleasure therin. For by this new birth God hath found out, and done what soeuer men can desire. For what els do men couet and desire, but to obtaine saluation, to be deliuered from synne, death, and hell?

Of the holy Ghost. Lastly, that he may the more expresse the greatnes and vertue of grace, he attributeth this washing of the new birth, and renewing, to the holy Ghost. For this washing, is so great, and of so weightie importaunce, that no creature but the holy Ghost alone is able to perfourme it. But how much, most excellent Paul, doost thou condemne free wil, the great good workes of the proud holy ones, that is, the merits of hypocrites? In how bie a place doest thou set our saluation, and again, how doest thou bring it downe to vs, and placest it neere vs, yea euen within vs? how purely & syncerely doest thou set forth grace in these wordes? Wherefore worke what soeuer and how much soeuer thou wilt, it is vnpossible for a man to be renewed, and the person chaunged (without which no workes acceptable to God

Onely the washing of ỹ newe birth & renewing

can

can be done) but by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost. That we may plainely see in those hypocriticall counterfaitours of workes. For thou shalt fynde none harder, none prouder, none so rash and hastie spirits. For they are broken, and not renewed, indurate, obstinate, confirmed by continuance, couering in deede, and some what adorning that old Adam by those their counterfaite good workes, but in the meane season there doth not any whit appeare any chaunge of nature in them, they continue still in the oldenes of their corrupt flesh. O, what a pestilent people is this, and in how great indignation of God are they, when as in the meane tyme they thinke that they sit in Gods lappe? Nowe whereas the Apostle attributeth this washing of the newe birth, and renewing to the holy Ghost, he sayth the same which Christ doth John 3. where he sayth: Except a man be borne againe of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdome of God. For that which Christ signified by water, the Apostle calleth the washing, so both made mention of newe birth, and of the holy Ghost. And we must marke that that which is spoken here of the holy Ghost both by Christ, and the Apostle, must not be referred to that Papisticall confirmation, as they call it, for both of them referred to Baptisme, that which is here mentioned concerning the holy Ghost, who when the body is washed with water doth himselfe worke the newe birth, and renewing by faith, which Christ called, to be borne againe of the spirit. We read in the Actes of the Apostles, that the Apostles did eftsones lay their handes on them that were baptised, and that so the holy Ghost came vpon them by a visible signe, which the Papistes also snatch to their confirmation. But as that was done, that the beleeuers might by a visible signe be endued with the holy Ghost, to preach the Gospell in diuers languages, so it continued onely the time thereof, vntill the doctrine of the Gospell was commended to the worlde by sufficient signes, wherefore it is nowe longe since worne out of vse: but that a certaine ceremonie hath come from thence euen vnto vs, of layinge handes on them, which are ordained Ministers or Preachers, which is nowe brought into an vngodlie and pernitious vse: but of these thinges in an other place.

Washing of the new birth and renewing attributed to ỹ holy Ghost

. Which is ſhed on vs aboundantly. See how notably the Apoſtle ſetteth forth grace, he ſayth not that the holy Ghoſt was giuen, but ſhed, and not that onely, but ſhed aboundantly. For he can not ſufficiently extoll and magnifie grace, and the worke thereof, and we, alas, count it ſo vile in reſpect of our workes. It were a diſhonour to God and to his holy Spirit, if when he hath plentifully ſhed it vpon vs, there ſhould as yet be ſome thing wanting, neceſſarie to righteouſnes and ſaluation, which we are able to perfourme, as though the workes of ſo incomparable grace could not be ſufficient. And Paul ſurely might be reproued of lying, which had not ſpoken all thinges whereby we muſt be iuſtified and ſaued, when he affirmeth that he doth it. But as he writeth, ſo it is: no man can attribute ſo great thinges to this waſhing and regeneration, no man can ſo much preſume of them, but greater thinges may be attributed vnto them, and thou oughteſt to promiſe to thy ſelfe moe thinges of them: no man ſhall beleeue ſo great thinges, but he ſhall receiue greater. Foraſmuch as thoſe good thinges which God hath giuen, are ſo great and ſo vnſpeakeable, he would haue them here come vnto vs being included and hyd in his words and fayth, For the nature of our preſent life can not beare them being manifeſt, and therefore it muſt periſh, when they beginne to be reuealed, that man maye by theſe inestimable riches, which he nowe poſſeſſeth by faith, be as it were ſwallowed vp, and vaniſh awaye. We are already aboundantly iuſtified by fayth, without all our owne merit, therefore Chriſt ſayth, Ioh. 3. God ſo loued the world, that he hath giuen his only begotten Sonne, that who ſoeuer beleueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life. Behold, they that beleeue, haue already euerlaſting life, and therefore vndoutedly are iuſtified and holy without all their owne laboure or meanes: that thou maieſt ſee, that nothing but grace and mercie is plentifully powred vpon vs, and that our workes could auaile nothing hereunto.

The workes of the diuine grace ſufficient for our ſaluation without any addition of our owne workes.

Thou wilt perhaps ſay: Thou canſt not preach ſufficiently, that the grace and mercie of God doth worke all thinges in vs, and that no reſpect is to be had of our workes, to the attaining of ſaluation, but how commeth it to paſſe then, that the Scripture ſo oft witneſſeth that they ſhalbe ſaued which haue wrought

An obiectiō.

good

good wozkes? As Joh. 5. They ſhall come forth, that haue done good, vnto the reſurrection of life, but they that haue done euell vnto the reſurrection of condemnation. And Ro. 2. Honour and glorie to them that doe well, wrath and indignation to them that do ill. We read many ſentences here and there in the Scripture like vnto theſe. I anſwere: As the wordes ſound, ſo take them without all gloſſe, for it is euen ſo, they that do well ſhalbe ſaued, they that doe otherwiſe, ſhalbe condemned. But herein many erre from the truth of the Scripture, in that they iudg wozks accozding to the outward appearance, contrarie to the Scripture, which teacheth that no man can do good, whoe is not himſelfe good befoze, and by workes no man can become good, but wozkes take their goodnes of the wozker, and he becommeth good by the waſhing of the new birth, and by nothing els. This Chriſt meant Matth. 7. ſaying: A corrupt tree can not bring forth good frute, neither a good tree euell frute. Wherefoze make the tree either good oz euell, and it will bzing fozth like frutes. Hypocrites oftentimes do wozkes like to the wozkes of the Godly, yea ſometime hauing a goodlier ſhewe, foz they diligently praye, faſt, giue almes, and pzetend a merueilous holines, but Chriſt calleth theſe ſheepes clothing, wherewith moſt hurtfull wolues are clothed and hydden. Foz none of them is of a true humble, meeke, and bountifull heart, which they chiefely declare when they are rebuked, when their holynes is repzoued: foz then bzing they fozth their naturall frutes, whereby they are knowen. Thoſe are, raſhe iudgementes, impaciencie, ſtubburnnes, obſtinacie, ſclaundering, and ſuch like. It is true therefoze, he that doth well, ſhalbe ſaued, that is, his ſaluation ſhalbe manifeſt, but he can doe no good at all, if he be not befoze regenerate by the waſhing of the newe birth. Foz what good wozkes can one wozke in the oldenes of the fleſhe, and by the ſtrength pzoceeded from Adam, they are the good wozkes which Paule here condemneth, ſaying: Not by the workes of righteouſnes which we had done. They are in deede good wozkes done in righteouſnes, but not befoze God, who firſt hath reſpect to the perſon, and then to the wozkes, as we read Gen. 4. that he had reſpect firſt to Abel, then to his ſacrifice, as he firſt turneth himſelfe from Caine, and then from his ſacrifice, although accozding to the outward appea-

The anſwere

Works muſt not be iudged good according to the outward appearance.

rance it was as good a sacrifice and worke, as the sacrifice of Abel.

Through Iesus Christ our Sauiour. This he added that he may keepe vs vnder the winges of Christ, as chickins are wont to be preserued vnder the winges of the hen: for thus Christ sayth Matth. 23. Ierusalem, Ierusalem, how often would I haue gathered thy children togither, as the hen gathereth her chickins vnder her winges and ye would not? And hereby the nature of a true and right faith is taught. For it is nothing which some say: I beleeue in God almightie, as the Iewes and many other are wont, and do therefore receiue corporall benefites of God. It is a true and liuely faith, whereby thou beleeuest in God, howbeit by Iesus Christ. First that thou doubt not that God is become a mercifull father vnto thee, which hath pardoned all thy sinnes, & in baptisme hath adopted thee for his sonne and heire; that thou maiest certainly know that thou art saued. Againe, thou must also knowe this, that that was not done freely, neither without satisfaction made to the diuine iustice. For there can be no place in thee for the diuine grace and mercy to worke saluation; and to giue thee eternall good thinges, vnlesse the iustice of God be before most fully satisfied. For Christ witnesseth Matth. 5. One iote, or one title of the Law shal not escape, til all thinges be fulfilled. That which is spoken of the grace and goodnes of God, can not come but to them which do most purely & exactly obserue his commaundements, according to that saying Mich. 2. When as the Iewes did presume of the goodnes of God toward them, and did alwayes promise vnto them selues peace, saying: How can God be alwaies angrie, is the spirit of the Lord shortened? It is aunswered them: Are not my wordes good vnto him that walketh vprightly? Wherefore it shall be lawfull for none to attaine vnto the aboundance of grace, vnles he hath before most exactly satisfied the cõmaundements of God. Now it hath bin spoken at large, that our workes are nothing before God, whereby we can not fulfill so much as the least commaundement of God, how much lesse shall we be able so to satisfie the iustice of God, that we may become worthie of his grace? Moreouer, if we were able to fulfill all the commaundements of God, and in all thinges to satisfie his iustice, notwithstanding we had not as yet deserued grace and saluation, neither

What a true & liuely faith beleeueth.

Though we could and should fulfill the commaũdementes of God, yet should we merit nothig of him.

should

should be therfore owe it vnto vs, for that he may by the right of creation require as due seruice, all those things of vs his creatures, created to liue vnto him. Wherefore it should yet come of grace and mercie, whatsoeuer should come from him to vs. This Christ declared verie well Luke 17. speaking in a parable: Which of you hauing a seruaunt plowing, or feeding cattell, would saye vnto him by and by, when he were come from the field; Go, and sit downe at the table? and would not rather say to him, dresse wherewith I may suppe, and girde thy selfe, and serue me, till I haue eaten and dronken, and afterward eat thou and drinke thou? Doeth he thanke that seruaunt, because he did that which was commaunded vnto him? I trowe not. So likewise ye, when ye haue done all those things which are commaunded you, say: We are vnprofitable seruaunts: we haue done that which was our dutie to do.

Seeing then that heauen is giuen of grace, and for no merit, euē vnto those, if there were any such, which haue done all things that were commaunded them, according to that promise: If thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commaundements: what shall we boast of our good workes, which although they were most absolute, yet should they be vnworthy of heauen, but inasmuch as it is giuen vs by the free and mercifull promise? Hereupon (for that we must so satisfie the diuine iustice, and yet not withstanding our workes are not able to attaine thereunto, whereunto if they should attaine, yet should they deserue no grace or saluatiō, for that they are before due) God first gaue vnto vs a man, which should satisfie the diuine iustice for vs in all thinges. Againe, he hath by the same man bestowed this grace and bountifulnes vpon vs, that albeit we without our owne merit and worthines, yea hauing euil deserued and being vnworthie, do receaue grace, yet it commeth not vnto vs altogither freely and without all merit, for we haue it through the merit and satisfaction of Christ. Whereupon Paul sayth Rom. 5. As by the offence of one, sinne came on all men to condemnation: so by the iustifying of one, that is, of Iesus Christ, the benefite aboūded toward al men to the iustification of life. That is: As without all our merit, and owne worke we fell into sinne, being borne synners, so againe without all our merit and meanes, we are redeemed from sinnes, by the washing of the spirit borne againe the sonnes of God, par-

We had need of one who should satisfie the diuine iustice for vs.

Not by our owne merit, but by ỹ merit of Christ are we saued.

takers of grace and saluation. And this is the cause why the Apostle where he speaketh of faith and grace, is wont to adde, by Iesus Christ: whereby surely he would giue vs to vnderstand, that none should count it sufficient, if he say: I beleeue in God, Christ being neglected. He that truely beleeueth, must acknowledge, that his faith can not be acceptable to God, yea that it can be no faith at all, if all the commaundements of God be not before fulfilled, which seeing it is aboue thy ability, (and if it were not, yet notwithstanding thou hadst performed nothing, but that thou oughtest, and hadst as yet merited nothing, hauing fulfilled euen all the commaundements of God) thou hast neede of an other, which in all thinges may satisfie the diuine iustice for thee, and may also merit heauen for thee. Now this other is our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, who hath for thee fulfilled the whole Lawe, and merited for thee, that God now according to his iustice can not but giue heauen vnto thee, and in all thinges acknowledge thee for his sonne and heire. And this is a true and sounde faith, which trusteth in God by Christ, and is certaine that by his merit it hath already receiued of God saluation, which shortly after shalbe reuealed with blessed aboundance of felicitie.

Christian faith.

Neither can any other be called Christian faith, but that, whereby it is beleeued, that by Christ doe come vnto vs both satisfaction, which we owe to the iustice of God, and the gift of saluation, which we our selues by no meanes, if the Lawe could euen be fulfilled of vs, can merit. Whereupon Paul Rom. 4. sayth: Christ was deliuered to death for our synnes, and rose againe for our iustification. That is, by Christ we haue receiued, not onely remission of our sinnes, but moreouer also, that before God we are accounted righteous, & the sonnes of his grace. To the same effect also tendeth that which he sayth Rom. 3. Whom God hath set forth to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood. Where againe we learne, that it is true faith, which trusteth in the bloud of Christ, and beleeueth that thereby it shall obtaine grace. Whereas thou beleeuest that he hath shed his bloud for thee, thou receauest satisfaction: in that thou acknowledgest him the reconciliation, thou confessest that by his merite the diuine grace and saluation doe come vnto thee. We haue all thinges without our owne merit and meanes, but not without the

We haue all thinges necessary to saluation, not by any merit of our owne, but by the merit and meanes of Iesus Christ.

merit

merit and meanes of Christ, who hath for this cause shed his blood. Therefore that we may allude vnto ỳ parable of Christ, we must containe our selues vnder his winges, and not vpon trust in our selues flie out and contend to come vnto God, otherwise we shalbe a praye to the hellish kite. For as it hath bin oftẽ sayd, our righteousnes, our merits, yea and our faith shall preuaile nothing, without this our mediatour Christ. And therefore he sayth Joh. 14. No man commeth vnto the Father but by me. And in the whole Gospell what other thing doth he, but endeuour to take vs out of our selues, and to transferre vs to himselfe vnder his winges, that we may trust onely in his satisfaction and merit? The same the Apostle also teacheth in the wordes following.

That we beeing iustified by his grace should be made heires according to the hope of eternall life. He sayth that we are iustified, not by our owne workes, but by the grace of the same Iesus Christ. That is, we are therefore iustified, for that Christ hath the grace of the Father, hauing fulfilled his will in all thinges, and thereby merited eternall life. For seeing that he hath no neede of this merit, he giueth it vnto vs which do beleeue in him, that before God all his thinges may be imputed to vs, and by them we may receiue saluation. See, how rich a thing sound faith is, and how great good things it bringeth with it. See also how precious a thing the Gospell is, and how great a treasure it is to haue it purely preached: and contrariwise, how great a discomoditie there is, where it is not preached, or not rightly preached, the inuentions of men being mingled with it, or thrust in stede of it. Take heede therefore of such deceiuers, and of their counterfet faith, rest not in thy selfe, but get thee vnder ỳ winges of Christ, keepe thy selfe vnder his protection, trust that thou art heire of eternall life, not by thy owne righteousnes, or grace which thou hast receiued, but whereby he is righteous and acceptable before God. Hereunto pertaineth this saying Psal. 91. He will couer thee vnder his winges, and thou shalt be safe vnder his fethers. And in the Songe of Salomon it is sayd: My spouse is a doue, building her neast in the caues of the rockes, and in the holes of the wall, that is, in the woundes of Christ. And this in deede is a true Christian faith, which resteth not in it selfe as the Scholemen dreamed, but reposeth it selfe wholy in

We are iustified by the grace of Christ Iesus.

Christ, and as it trusteth in him, so it resteth in him, hauing receiued eternall saluation. Whereas he sayth that we are made heires of eternall life according to hope, beside that he proueth, that we without all our owne merits, by onely hope of grace are borne againe heires of eternall life, and do not become heires by working, whereof we haue already spoken at large, he also teacheth this, that our saluation and eternall life is as yet hid, although, if we beleeue, we doe verely possesse it, and this body being put of, and the kingdome of Christ reuealed, all thinges shall appeare manifestly.

The weapons of this text.

Our owne righteousnes and good works are of no power to saue vs.

This text fighteth most mightely, and with most plaine words against all righteousnes and good workes of mans reason, and free will. For the wordes are plaine. Not by the workes of righteousnes, which we had done, but according to his mercie he saued vs, by the washing, &c. All which wordes do vtterly ouerthrow our righteousnes, attributing all things to ỳ washing of the newe birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, to Christ and his grace. How can there notwithstanding any presumption as yet remaine in vs? Wherefore let all sacred and prophane lawes haue a fayre shew: let all sacrificing priests, monkes, and nunnes boast of them selues: let all religious and honest men and women seeme goodly in outward appearaunce: let them euen raise the dead: if faith in Christ be absent, whereof we haue now spoken so much, all these things are to no purpose. These most false shewes do as yet deceiue the whole world, and seduce almost euerie one. They make the Gospell obscure, and extinguish the faith of Christ: All their workes and orders, although they appeare goodly, and they thinke them to haue merited neuer so much, do auaile no more vnto saluation, then the workes of beastes, or of artificers, whereby they do maintaine them selues and theirs, yea they do most hurtfully hinder it. Therefore that I may conclude, take heede as much as thou art able, of these wolues, which vnder a faire pretence counterfet themselues sheepe, and learne and accustome thy selfe with a sound faith to cleaue vnto Christ alone.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

FOrasmuch as there is often mention made in the new Testament of these wordes, the kingdome of heauē, the kingdom of God, ỳ kingdome of Christ, and it is very profitable and expedient for a Christian to know these, to wit, that they are nothing els, but remission of sinnes, and grace preached and offered by the Gospell. For in this kingdom thou shalt finde nothing but grace and goodnes, pardon and forgiuenes of sinnes, loue ad gentlenes: I therefore thinke it good to entreate somewhat at large of the state and kingdom, and of forgiuenes of sinnes. The kingdom of God, whereby he reigneth ouer all the faithfull, and as a faithfull king defendeth, punisheth, rewardeth, guideth, and directeth them, &c. they againe from their hart trust in him, suffer his fatherly chastisement and correction with a patient mind, and alwayes serue him through obedience, is not wordly or temporal, but spiritual. Neither consisteth in meate and drinke, or in any outward thing, but onely in iustification, quieting and consolation of the hart and conscience of man. Wherfore it is nothing els, but forgiuenes and taking away of sinnes, by which consciences are defiled, troubled, and disquieted. For euen as a wordely and tempozall kingdom is ordayned to this ende, that men may liue quietly & peaceably one with an other: So the kingdome of God giueth these thinges spiritually, and destroyeth the kingdom of sinne, and is nothing else, but an abolishing and pardoning of offences, God reigneth in the hartes, inasmuch as he worketh in them by his word, peace quietnes and consolation: euen as sinne worketh the contrary, namely, vnquietnes, anguish, and all kinde of euills. Herein God sheweth his maiestie and grace in this life, that he taketh away and pardoneth mens sinnes: and this is the kingdome of grace. Now when as sinne with his gard, that is Satan, death, and hell, shall trouble man no more, then at the last

The kingdō of God wher in it consisteth. A similitude.

the kingdom of glory, and absolute felicitie shall be.

Herupon it followeth: first, that the kingdom of God is ruled or gouerned by no law, no not by the law of God, much lesse by the lawes of men, but onely by the Gospell, and faith in God, by which harts are purified, comforted and quieted, whiles that the holy Ghost poureth loue and the knowledge of God into them, & maketh man as it were one thinge and one spirit with God: so that his affection is set vpon the same thinge, he willeth and desireth the same thinge, he seeketh and loueth the same thinge that God doth. Neither standeth the case otherwise here, then it doth betweene two frendes, which beare good wil one to an other, and agree one with an other in all thinges. Hereof it commeth, that a man in this kingdome of God is perfect, mercifull, pitifull and bountifull toward his neighbour, seeing that he knoweth by the instinct of the holy Ghost, that God is of ỹ same affection toward him, and toward all men, and doth poure forth his goodnes plentifully. Such affection of God no man can know by the lawe, but onely by the spirit, and worde of the Gospell. None therefore shal obtaine quietnes, comfort, and peace of the hart, or attaine vnto the kingdom of God by any law. And they which prescribe many lawes, doe withdraw men from the kingdom of God to the kingdom of sinne, wherein is nothing els, but vnquietnes, anguish, affliction, aduersitie, and all kind of euills tormenting the conscience. Like as on the contrary, in the kingdom and knowledge of God, there is mere ioy, peace, and consolation of hartes.

The kingdō of God is gouerned, not by the lawe, but by the Gospell.

Secondly: In this kingdō of God the Lord Christ reigneth no otherwise then as a Maister of an Hospitall among the sicke, poore, and diseased. For vnto this kingdome none pertaine, but sinnefull and miserable men, vnto whome their sinnes are forgiuen whereupon Christ sayth in the Gospell Luke 6. Wo be to you that are riche, which haue receiued your consolation. But contrariwise, the poore, miserable, and succoureles receiue comfort and ioy by the Gospel: for Christ came to call sinners onely, and not the righteous, that all glorie may be referred to God alone, for that he forgiueth sinnes of his grace and meere mercy. Such abolishing or putting away of sinne, wherein Christ reigneth as a King of the kingdome of God, is done of him after two sortes: first thus, in that he remitteth, pardoneth and coureth sinnes, so that God will not regard, remember or reuenge them although

How Christ reigneth in the kingdom of God.

Christ putteth away sinne after two sortes.

although they be in a man. As it is in the 32. Psalme: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiuen, and whose sinnes are couered. Blessed is the mā to whom the Lord wil not impute sinne, in whose spirit there is no guile. And in Esay cap. 43. God saith: I am, euen I am he, that for myne owne selfs sake do away thine offences, and forget thy sinnes, so that I will neuer thinke vpon them. Secondly thus, in that he purgeth or rather scoureth sinnes by diuers crosses and afflictiōs. For they are two things, to remit sinnes, and to weaken the body of sinne that it may not reigne in vs. If a man beleeue, and is baptized, then all his sinnes are forgiuen him. But afterwarde sinne must be scoured or abated by manifould affliction and mortification, as longe as he shal liue. Sinne sticketh in vs, as long as the mortal body remaineth, but for Christes sake it is not imputed in the wrath of God, but freely remitted, and the force therof diminished by his fatherly chastisment. In such chastisement for their amendement, true Christians haue great comfort, peace, and ioye, as Paule sayth Rom. 5. Then being iustified by faith, we haue peace toward God, through our Lord Iesus Christ, by whō also through faith, we haue had this accesse into this grace, wherin we stand, and reioyce vnder the hope of the glory of God. Neither that onely, but also we reioyce in tribulations, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and pacience experience, & experiēce hope. And hope maketh not ashamed, because the loue of God is shed abroad in our harts by the holy Ghost which is giuen vnto vs. So thou hast two thinges to be considered: The first, that in this kingdom of God we are iustified. The seconde, that by tribulation and affliction we are glorified, without which we can not attaine to glorie.

True Christiās reioyce in affliction.

Thirdly, good Christians are not knowen by this, when any suffer manifold tribulation & chastisement, that the body of sinne may be weakened, and they brought to amendement. For herein they doe altogither differ among them selues, one suffereth this, an other that: one is chased thus, an other otherwise, so that euen the very Apostles did not loue and suffer alike: But they are knowen in forgiuenes of sinnes, or iustification by faith, wherein God turneth his anger from them, & receiueth them vnto grace, and counteth them for his deare children, and imputeth no sinne to them to condemnation. Herein are all alike, euen as all

liue vnder one heauen. Wherefore they doe most grossely erre & stumble, which measure Christians by maners, workes, and the outwarde maner of liuing, euen as the Pharisei's were wont to doe, and did therefore finde fault with Christ, for that he did not obserue their ceremonies, but was a frend of Publicanes and sinners. As that Pharise sayd within him selfe Luke 7. If this man were a Prophet, he would surely haue knowne who, and what maner of woman this is, which toucheth him: for she is a sinner. Here nowe an example of those thinges which are before sayd: A Phisitian which goeth about to cure the sicke, doth first promise him health by the assistance and helpe of God, whereby he putteth him in great hope and comfort. Afterward he beginneth to purge, to clense and strengthen, and such like thinges which make to the recouering of health: So God also, when he hath remitted sinnes, and receaued man into the bosom of grace, doth lay on him all kind of afflictions, and doth scoure him, and renewe him from day to day, in the knowledge and loue of God, vntil he become safe, pure and renewed, which then at the last cõmeth to passe, when this mortall body dyeth.

A similitude

Fourthly in these two partitions of the kingdom of God, two sortes of men are founde, which abuse the same kingdome of the grace of God, and the Gospell. Some become sluggish and slothfull, saying: Well, if sinnes be pardoned freely of meere grace, and be washed away in baptisme, there is no neede that I should adde any thing of mine owne. Other thinke contrariwise, that they shal put away their sinnes by workes, and so trusting to their owne merits, they are proud and arrogant, and in respect of themselues contemne other, which doe not so. The first of these contemne Gods grace: the other oppugne it, as not sufficient, and so they represent swine and dogges. Now all this appeareth by the Gospell, by which Christ reigneth in the kingdom of God. For some abuse it vnto carnall libertie: other contrariwise are perswaded, that it is not sufficient to saluation, but that their workes also doe helpe somwhat, and by this they deny and contemne the grace of God. Hereof thou mayst read more in the Epistle to the Romanes, wherein these two sortes of men are plainly set forth.

Two sortes of men abuse the kingdom of grace.

Fiftly, this kingdom of God, or remission of sinnes hath no bounde or measure, as that place of the Gospell doth very well shew, where Peter asketh the Lord: Lord, how oft shall my brother

Mat. 18. 21. 22

ther sinne against me, & I shall forgiue him? vnto seuen times? Iesus sayd vnto him, I say not to thee, vnto seuē times, but vnto seuenty times seuen times, that is, as often as shall be needefull. After this followeth a parable, which the Lorde there putteth forth, wherein he most seuerely admonisheth vs, if we will not fal out of the fauour of God, that we forgiue our neighboure his offences without all delay or grudging, forasmuch as God alwayes forgiueth vs innumerable sinnes. Our dette, whereby we are bound vnto God, is ten thousand talents, that is, so vnmeasurable and great, that we are not able to pay it with all our substance, all our strength and workes. For we can put away no one sinne, although it be euen very litle. Seeing therefore that God doth remit so many sinnes of his grace in his kingdome, it is meete, that we should forgiue our neighbour a few offences. Of this kingdom of God, wherein sinnes are forgiuen, the Scripture euery where maketh mention, and sayth, that the kingdom & dominion of Christ doth extend from one ende of the lande to the other. So sayth Dauid Psal. 72. His dominions shall be from the one sea to the other, and from the fludde vnto the ende of the earth. And a litle after he sayth: All nations shall serue him. This also the Angell Gabriell declared to the Virgine Marie Luke 1. where he sayth thus of Christ: The Lord shall giue vnto him the throne of his father Dauid, and he shall reigne ouer the house of Iacob for euer, and of his kingdom shall be no end. these and such like places do shew that the forgiuenes of sinnes, wherin the kingdom of God doth especially consist, hath no measure or bound.

We must forgiue our neighbours, if we will haue God to forgiue vs.

Sixtly, hereof we may see, how vnchristianly they doe, which bringe forgiuenes of sinnes to a certaine measure, as they doe, which measure out their indulgences for prescribed yeares, with forgiuenes of the third, fourth, or halfe part. For hereby they bring the kingdom of God into a narrow and straite roome, and are iniurious to his mercie, forasmuch as there is no end of his kingdom, nor measure of his mercy. But whosoeuer shall in faith call vpon the name of God, shall be saued, as often as he doth it. Moreouer when the sinner shall be sory for his sinnes, the Lorde will no more remember them, as it is in the Prophecie of Ezechiel, chap. 18.

An vnchristian thinge to prescribe a measure to forgiuenes of sinnes.

Seuenthly, as this kingdome of God hath no measure or li-

mits of forgiuenes of sinnes, so also it hath no ende, but endureth continually without ceassing: albeit the subiectes of this kingdom doe not abide in it continually, firmely and faithfully, but do often times forsake it. So the fauour and grace of God were continually with Peter, although he denied the Lorde, and reuolted from him. To the same effect tendeth the parable in the Gospell whereof we haue now spoken. For the seruaunt, which would not haue pitie of his felow seruaunt, did make himselfe vnworthy of the mercie of God, did depriue himselfe of the kingdom of God, which consisteth in pardoning of offences, as it is aboue mentioned. Here Vniuersitie Diuines of a pregnant wit, as they seeme vnto them selues, and puffed vp with knowledge, haue disputed, whether and how forgiuenes of sinnes doth come againe, when man iterateth or renueth his sinne, not knowinge what they say. But follow thou the plaine and simple wordes of the Gospell, to wit, that thy sinnes are so often forgiuen thee, as thou dost forgiue thy brother, whom thou must so often forgiue as he shall offend against thee. Wherefore in this parable, whereof I haue euen now made mention, Christ doth admonish vs al, that we pardon and forgiue all them that haue offended vs. As if he would say: As in mans affayres, he which is beneficial to an other, hath other also beneficiall vnto him againe, so sayth Christ, in ỳ kingdom of heauen, which consisteth specially in forgiuenes of sinnes, that is in Christianity or among Christians, he which pardoneth an other his offences, I also will pardon him his. And on the contrary, he that is not mercifull toward an other, to him I also will deny grace. I am ouer you as Lord and King, and ye are felow seruaunts and companions one with an other. Seeing therefore that I your Lorde doe readily forgiue you, you also ought more readily to forgiue one an other. After the same sort also he hath commaunded vs to pray in the Lords prayer, Matth. 6. Forgiue vs our dettes: which he would not haue done, if he did not promise and would not mercifully forgiue vs. But neuertheles he added a condition or signe to this promise, when he sayth: If ye forgiue men their trespasses, your heauenly father will also forgiue you. The first is a signe, ỳ other a promise. Marke that it is here enioyned vs, to forgiue on an other his sinnes and offences, so, that we must be mercifull and bountifull towarde our neighbours, if we will haue the heauenly father gentle and appeased toward

We must forgiue our brethren when they offend against vs.

toward vs. And let vs be most certainely perswaded hereof, when we shall interpret at the best, and excuse as much as equitie doth suffer, the offences and trespasses of other, although they be euen great and grieuous, that we also shall haue a bountifull and mercifull father towards vs in heauen. Wherefore it is a thing most abhorring from Christiantie, and euen blasphemous, when it is sayd: I can not, neither will I forgiue him that which he hath committed against me. I wil be reuenged, &c. Surely those blind mē are ignorant, that they do take from God his glory, to whom alone vengeance belongeth, and chalenge it to them selues, and so they giue vp to the deuill their owne soules, which they haue receiued of God, & ought to render them vnto him againe, wherunto they are perhaps prouoked euen with some small or trifleling matter. Such kind of men as these ought to sette before the eyes of their hart, these wordes of the Gospell, Matth. 18. O euill seruant, I forgaue thee all that dette, because thou prayedst me: oughtest not thou also to haue had pitie on thy fellow seruant, euen as I had pitie on thee? So his Lord was wrath, & deliuered him to the tormētors, til he should pay all that was due to him: So likewise shall mine heauenly Father doe vnto you, except ye forgiue from your harts eche one to his brother their trespasses. Neither is it sufficient, if in gestures, signes, mouth or tongue thou shew thy selfe a frend vnto him, and forgiue him, but thou must doe it from thy hart, otherwise God will not forgiue thee, yea thou shalt be driuen out of the kingdom of grace. Wherfore if at any time we haue tryed the mercie of God towarde vs, we must also readily pardon our felow brethren, which haue offended vs. For in that respect the mercifull Father forgiueth vs our sinnes, that we also should forgiue our brethren, & shew mercy towards them, euen as he is merciful toward vs and remiteth sinne, death, the fault and the punishment. When we shal do this, then are we receaued into the kingdom of God. For the goodnes of God liueth in our hartes, and maketh vs also good. Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, yet neuertheles he reigneth in the hartes and consciences of the faithfull, so that they loue, feare, reuerence, and diligently obey him, no otherwise then obedient subiectes do their King, and in all their doinges are made like to him, euen as he himselfe sayth, Matth. 5. Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heauen, is perfect. Now God is perfect

A most vnchristian thing not to forgiue our brethren, but to beare malice in our hart & seeke to be reuenged.

in this, that he taketh away and pardoneth our wickednes, defect, sinne, and imperfection, that we also may doe the like to our brethren. But when as we shall not doe the like, we are driuen out of his kingdom, & are made subiect to the kingdom of sinne, death, and the deuill, as disloyall and disobedient inhabitants of some countrie, are thrust out. Which God of his mercy turne from vs, Amen.

All these thinges may be comprehended in the principall pointes following.

1 *Christ reigneth: when by faith of the Gospell, he worketh the goodnes and grace of God in our hartes, and maketh them like vnto God.*

2 *In such a kingdom the conscience enioyeth peace, consolation and rest, when it vnderstandeth and knoweth that God is mercifull vnto it, and imputeth not sinnes.*

3 *Therfore man beareth all kind of tribulation and affliction, by which sinne is scoured, and the force therof abated. He also endeuoureth to be beneficiall vnto other, as he himselfe hath bene as it were ouerwhelmed of the benefits of God.*

4 *And so the Lord raigneth after two sortes: First, for that he maketh the faithfull certaine of the grace of God, and remission of sinnes. Secondly, for that he layeth the crosse vpon them, that the body of sinne may be weakened, and they brought to amendement.*

5 *He that forgiueth his detters pertaineth to the kingdome of God, but he that doth not forgiue them, remaineth vnder the kingdom of sinne.*

These things I thought good to speake in this present place concerning the kingdom of heauen, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ, which is the same: to wit, that it is nothing else but a kingdom, in which thou shalt finde nothing but forgiuenes of sinnes. Which kingdom is preached and offered vnto vs by the Gospell, God graunt that we may so receiue it. Amen.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER OF PRAYER.

That prayer may be good in deede, and may also be heard, we must first consider that two thinges are necessarie therunto: one, that we first meditate vpon the promise of God, and doe as it were aduertize God thereof, and trusting vnto it, be emboldned and made cheerefull to pray: for vnles God had commaunded vs to pray, and had promised also that he will heare vs, euen all creatures could not obtayne so much as a graine by their petitions. Whereupon it followeth, that no man doth obtaine any thinge of God for his owne worthines, or the worthines of his prayer, but by the onely goodnes of God, who preuenting all our petitions and desires, prouoketh vs to pray and desire of him, by his gentle and bounteous promise and commaundement, that we may learne howe great care he hath ouer vs, and is ready to giue vs moe thinges, then we durst enterprise to aske, and that we may also learne to pray boldely, inasmuch as he giueth vs all thinges euen in more ample maner then we doe aske them. It is necessarie that we doe no whit doute of the promise of the true and faithfull God, for therefore he hath promised that he will heare vs, yea and hath commaunded vs to pray, that we might haue a sure and stronge fayth, that our prayer should be so heard, as he sayth Matth. 21. and Marke 11, Whatsoeuer ye shall aske in prayer, if ye beleeue, ye shall receyue it. And in Luke chap. 11. And I say vnto you, Aske, and it shall be giuen you: seeke, and ye shall finde: knocke, and it shall be opened vnto you. For euery one that asketh, receiueth, and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a sonne shall aske bread of any of you that is a father, will ye giue him a stone? or if he aske a fish, will ye for a fish, giue him a serpent? or if he aske an egge, will ye giue him a scorpion? If ye then which are euill, can giue good gifts vnto your children, how

The promise of God is first to be considered of in prayer.

We must no thing doute of the promise of God in prayer.

much more ſhall your heauenly Father giue the holy Ghoſt to them that deſire him? We muſt boldly truſt to theſe, and ſuch like promiſes and commaundements, and pray with true confidence.

He that douteth of the promiſes of God in praier, committeth a double ſinne.

If one ſo prayeth, that he dout whether God heare him, and maketh his prayer onely at aduenture, caring not greatly whether he be hearde or not hearde: he committeth a double offence: One, for that he him ſelfe maketh his prayer fruſtrate, and laboureth in vaine. For ſo James ſayth chap. 1. He that will aske of the Lord let him aske in faith, and wauer not: for he that wauereth, is like a waue of the ſea, toſt of the winde, and caried away, let not that man thinke that he ſhall receiue any thinge of the Lord. Such a mans hart is not quiet & ſetled wherfore God can giue him nothing. But faith maketh the hart quiet, and capable of the gifts of God. The other offence is, that he counteth the moſt faithfull and true God, as a lying, vaine, and vnconſtant man, as he which neither is able, neither will fulfill his promiſes ſo by his douting he robbeth God of his honour, & name of faithfulnes, and truth. Whereby it is ſo grieuouſly offended, that euen that offence being committed, a Chriſtian is plainely chaunged into an Heathen, and denieth and loſeth his true God, ſo that if he continue, therein, he is damned for euer without all comfort: And if any thing be giuen vnto him, which he aſketh, it is giuen him not to good, but to euill, as well temporall as eternall, not for his prayers ſake, but from the wrath of God, that he may recompenſe thoſe goodly wordes, which are vttered in ſinnes, vnbeleefe, and to the diſhonour of God.

We muſt not therefore dout in our prayers for that we be vnworthy.

Some ſay: I would truſt in deede that my prayers ſhould be heard, if I were worthy, or if I could pray well. Then, ſay I, if thou wilt not pray, before thou ſhalt knowe and finde thy ſelfe fit to pray, that thou ſhalt neuer pray. For as it is before ſayde, our prayer muſt not reſt vpon our worthines, or the worthines of it ſelfe, or be grounded theron, but vpon the immutable truth of the promiſe of God. If ſo be that it truſt to it ſelfe or any other thing, and ground it ſelfe thereon, it is falſe, and deceiueth thee, albeit thy hart ſhould euen be burſt by reaſon of the ardent affection of godlines, and thou ſhouldeſt weepe nothing but dropps of bloud. For therefore we pray, becauſe we are vnworthy to pray, and hereby ſurely we are made worthy to pray, and fit to be hearde, inaſmuch

inasmuch as we thinke that we are worthy, and doe boldly and cheerefully trust to the faithfulnes and truth of God. Although thou be unworthy, yet haue regard hereunto, and marke most diligently, that a thousand times more consisteth in this, that thou honour the truth of God, and not with thy doutfulnes accuse his faithfull promise of falshood. For thine owne worthines doth not further thee, neither thy unworthines hinder thee: but infidelitie doth condemne thee, trust and confidence maketh thee worthy & preserueth thee. Wherefore so behaue thy selfe all thy life long, that thou doe not at any time esteeme thy selfe either worthy or fit to pray or receiue, unles thou finde thy selfe to be such a one, as dareth enterprise the matter freely, trusting to the true and certaine promise of thy mercifull God, which will so shewe both his mercy and goodnes unto thee, that as he promised to heare thee being unworthy, and hauing not deserued it, of his meere grace, moued with no prayers: so he will heare thee being an unworthy asker, of his onely grace, to the honour of his truth and promise, that so thou mayst giue thanks, not to thyne owne worthines, but to his truth, whereby he hath fulfilled his promise, and to his mercy, whereby he hath made and set forth his promise. And this the 25. Psalme confirmeth, where Dauid sayth. Gratious and righteous is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way. He will guide the meeke in iudgement, and teach the humble his way. All the pathes of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keepe his couenant, and his testimonies. Grace and mercy are in his promise, faithfulnes or truth in fulfilling and hearing. And in the 85. Psalme he sayth: Mercy and truth are met togither, righteousnes and peace haue kissed ech other, that is, they come togither in euery worke and guift, which we obtaine of the Lord by praying.

How we are made worthy to be heard in prayer

In this trust and confidence thou must so behaue thy selfe, that thou doe not limit to the Lorde any bound or ende, day or place, neither appoynt any maner or measure of hearing, but that thou do commit all those thinges to his diuine wil, wisdom, and omnipotencie, that thou boldly and cherefully looke to be heard, and yet not desire to know, how, and where, how soone and how long, and by what meanes. For his diuine wisdome, shall finde a better maner and measure, time and place, then we can thinke, euen although that should be don by miracles. Euen as in the olde Te-

We must not appoint vnto God how, when, or where he shall heare our prayers.

ſtament, Exod. 14. when the children of Iſraell truſted that God would deliuer them, and yet no poſſible meanes were before their eyes, or in all their thoughts, then the red ſea opened it ſelfe, and gaue them paſſage, drowning all their enemies at once. The holy woman Iudith, when ſhe heard that the Citizens of Bethulia would after the ſpace of fiue dayes giue vp the citie, if God in the meane time did not helpe them, rebuked them ſaying: What are ye, that ye tempt the Lorde? theſe are not deuiſes and purpoſes, whereby we obtaine mercy of God, but rather whereby we prouoke him vnto wrath and diſpleaſure. Will ye ſet the mercy of the Lorde a time, and appoint him a day after your will? Hereupon God did helpe her after a meruelous ſort, that at the laſt ſhe ſlue Holofernes, and put the enemies to flight. Iudith 13. So S. Paule alſo ſayth, Epheſ. 3. that the power of God is ſuch and ſo great, that it doth farre greater and better thinges then we either aſke or thinke. Wherefore we ought to thinke our ſelues more vile, then that we may name, appoynt, or preſcribe the time, place, maner, meaſure, and other circumſtances of that which we aſke of God, but we muſt leaue all thinges wholy vnto him, conſtantly and boldly beleeuing that he will heare vs.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING THE BIDDING OF GVESTS TO the great ſupper.

Luke 14.

Verſe. 16. A Certaine man made a great ſupper, and bade many.

17 And ſent his ſeruaunt at ſupper time to

to say to them that were bidden: Come for all thinges are now ready.

18 But they all with one mind began to make excuse: The first sayd vnto him, I haue bought a farme, and I must needes goe out and see it: I pray thee haue me excused.

19 And an other sayd, I haue bought fiue yoke of oxen, and I goe to proue them: I pray thee haue me excused.

20 And an other sayd, I haue maried a wife, and therefore I can not come.

21 So that seruaunt returned, & shewed his maister these thinges: Then was the good man of the house angry, and sayd to his seruaunt: Go out quickly into the streetes & lanes of the city, and bring in hether the poore, and the maymed, and the halt, and the blinde.

22 And the seruaunt sayd, Lord it is done as thou hast commaunded, and yet there is roome.

23 Then the master sayd to the seruaunt: Go out into the hie wayes & hedges, & compell them to come in, that myne house may be filled.

24 For I saye vnto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall tast of my supper.

AS in the whole Scripture, so in this text also we must endeuour, that according to our abilitie (as ye haue often times hearde heretofore) we may vnderstande the true and simple meaninge, and thereupon settle our harte and conscience. For he that shall encounter with Satan, must not wauer and stagger this way and that way, but must be certayne of his cause, and instructed with manifest places of Scripture, otherwise when the Deuill shall by an vncertaine place of Scripture drawe him to his forke, he will tosse him this way and that way, as the winde dothe a dry leafe. Wherefore out of this

text we muſt gather a certaine meaning, whereby we may perſiſt and ſtand ſure. Howbeit it is not to be vnderſtood of the reuerend Euchariſtie, or the bread of the Lordes table, although our Papiſtes haue miſerably wreſted it, as they haue done many other authorities of Scripture. But this is the ſcope, this is the ſumme of this text: that the Goſpell is preached and publiſhed through the whole world, but few receiue and imbrace it. And it is therefore here called a ſupper, for that ỳ Goſpel muſt be the laſt word, which ſhall continue to the end of the world. Wherefore the ſupper here is nothing els, but a very rich & ſumptuous feaſt, which God hath made through Chriſt by the Goſpell, which ſetteth before vs great good things and rich treaſures. And he ſent his ſeruaunt to byd men to this ſumptuous ſupper. That is: The Apoſtles were altogither ſent with one word into ỳ whole world, that they might byd and call men to this ſupper, with one voyce, with one Goſpell, with one ambaſſage: after ſuch ſort, that if S. Peter had come, and preached the Goſpell of God in that place where Paule had preached it before, yet had it bene one worde, and the ſame preaching, that the hearers ſhould haue bene compelled to ſay: Behold he preacheth the ſame that we heard before of the other, they wholy conſent and agree, & the thinge that they publiſh is all one. That the Euangeliſt might inſinuate this conſent and agreement in preaching, he ſayth: He ſent his ſeruaunt, he ſayth not, his ſeruaunts, as of many. Nowe this meſſage the ſeruaunt muſt doe to the bidden gueſts: Come for all things are now ready. For Chriſt had ſuffered death, & in his death hath ſlaine ſinne and death, alſo was riſen againe from death, the holy Ghoſt was giuen: & briefly all thinges were prepared which pertained vnto that great ſupper. All things were ready without al our coſt. For the Father by Chriſt hath payd the price of all things, that without all our merit and labour we might enioy his goodnes, and be nouriſhed and enriched. He ſendeth his ſeruaunt therefore firſt to the Iewes, to byd them to this great ſupper, vnto whom the promiſe was made of God. For the lawe and all the Prophets were directed hereunto, that they might prepare the people of God. As the Angel Gabriel declared of Iohn the Baptiſt to his father Zacharias Luke. 1. He ſhall be filled with the holy Ghoſt euen from his mothers womb, and many of the children of Iſraell ſhall he turne to their Lord God. For he ſhall go before him in the

The ſumme of the text.

The meſſage which the ſeruaũt doth to the gueſts bidden to the great ſupper.

the ſpirit and power of Elias, to turne the harts of the fathers to the children: & the diſobedient to the wiſedom of the iuſt men, to make ready a people prepared for the lord. But what did the gueſts anſwere to the meſſage of the ſeruaunt? the text following declareth.

But they all with one minde began to make excuſe. This is that whereof the Lord ſpeaketh Matth. 10. He that loueth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that loueth ſonne or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his croſſe, & followeth after me, is not worthy of me. For he that will be pertaker of this ſupper, muſt put all thinges into daunger for the Goſpels ſake, body, goods, wife, children, frendes, &c. Moreouer he muſt leaue all thinges whatſoeuer they be, that ſeparate him from the Goſpell, albeit they ſeeme good, iuſt, right, & holy. Neither thinke ye that theſe mē which here excuſe them ſelues, were gilty of grieuous ſinnes, or occupied about vniuſt matters and workes. For it is not vniuſt to bie, to vſe trade of marchandize, to maintaine him ſelfe honeſtly, to marie a wife, to be ioyned in matrimonie. But therefore can they not come to this ſupper, for that they will not forſake theſe things, but will rather cleaue to them in their hart. Nowe they muſt be vtterly forſaken and left, when the Goſpell ſo requireth. Thou wilt perhaps ſay: I would in deede willingly follow the Goſpell, I would cleaue vnto it, & doe all other things whatſoeuer, but to forſake goods, houſes, familie, wife, children, &c. ſurely this is a hard matter. God hath commaūded me to labour, to maintaine my wife and children, &c. Behold therfore this is the ſcope and ſumme, that the Goſpell is the worde of faith and offence, becauſe of which euery faithfull man doth beare offence willingly. In deede God hath willed thee to doe theſe thinges, howbeit he hath alſo commaunded, that thou preferre him before all creatures, and loue him aboue all thinges, and thinke him higher then all thinges which thou canſt know, euen as the chiefe and greateſt commaundement giueth vs to vnderſtande: Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy hart, with al thy ſoule, with all thy minde, Deut. 6. Wherefore thou muſt forſake all thinges before thou ſuffer thy ſelfe to be pluckt away from the loue of him, or his worde: although in deede he loſeth nothing, which forſaketh any thinge for the Goſpells ſake. If for the Go-

What they muſt do that will be pertakers of this great ſupper

ſpells ſake thou loſe this temporall life, God will giue thee an other farre better, to wit, eternall life, as Chriſt ſayth Matth. 10. He that will finde his life, ſhall loſe it, and he that loſeth his life for my ſake, ſhall finde it. If thou be compelled to forſake thy wife togither with thy children, remember that God hath a care of them, he will be a better father vnto them then thy ſelfe, which vndoutedly commeth to paſſe, if ſo be thou beleeue. For we haue very great & rich promiſes that he wil not ſuffer his word to fail, but will alwayes fulfill it, if we can freely and confidently truſt in him, and commit our ſelues wholy to him. Chriſt ſayth after this ſort Math. 19: Whoſoeuer ſhall forſake houſes, or brethren, or ſiſters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or landes, for my names ſake, he ſhall receiue an hundred folde more, and ſhall inherit euerlaſting life. We haue here his wordes and promiſe: what would we haue more? or what can we deſire more? wherein therefore doe we fayle? onely in our faith. Wherefore no man commeth to this ſupper, but he that bringeth with him a ſincere faith, which God preferreth and loueth aboue all creatures. But how doth the Lord recompenſe them which excuſed them ſelues that they could not come to the ſupper? The text it ſelfe declareth.

A found faith required in ỹ gueſtes of this ſupper.

Then was the good man of the houſe angry, and ſayd to his ſeruaunt: Goe out quickly into the ſtreetes and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poore, and the maymed, and the halt, and the blind. To goe into the ſtreetes and lanes is nothing elſe, but that whereas the Iewes made them ſelues vnworthy of the Goſpell, and did refuſe it, the Diſciples turned to the Gentiles. For it was enioyned them of Chriſt, that they ſhould not turne them ſelues to the Gentiles, nor preach the kingdome of God in the cities of the Samaritanes, but ſhould goe onely to the ſheepe of the houſe of Iſraell, and ſhould feede them onelie, as they did. Now the Iewes ſtriuing againſt this worde, and by no meanes receauing it, the Diſciples ſayd, Act. 13: It was neceſſarie that the word of God ſhould firſt haue bin ſpoken vnto you: but ſeing ye put it from you and iudge your ſelues vnworthy of euerlaſting life, lo, we turne to the Gentiles: for ſo hath the Lord cõmaunded vs, ſaying: I haue made thee a light of the Gentiles, that thou ſhouldeſt be the ſaluation vnto the end of the world. But what meaneth that which he ſayth moreuer to ỹ ſeruaunt?

The Goſpell was firſt to be preached to the Iewes, who becauſe they refuſed it, the Apoſtles turned to the Gentiles.

Goe

Goe into the hie wayes and hedges, and compell them to come in, that myne house may be filled. This is to be vnderstood of desperat and weake consciences, which also pertaine vnto this supper, and are compelled vnto it, but this compulsion is not outward, but inward and spirituall, and is done after this sort. When the law is preached, sinne is set before our eyes and reuealed, that a man may come to knowledge of himselfe, so that to compel, to enter or come in, doth rightly signifie, to driue sinne into the conscience, wherby a man may know that he is nothing, that all his workes are sinnes, and subiect to damnation, and so sodainly his conscience may become desperate, and his hart faint and terrified, that all that confidence and opinion of helpe may depart, and man him selfe be able no where to comfort him selfe in any thinge, and at the last be driuen to despaire of him selfe. If so be that one be once after this sort compelled, then doe not long delay to let him come in, but deliuer the man out of desperation. That commeth to passe, when thou comfortest him by the Gospell, and declarest that he is deliuered from his sinnes, saying: Beleeue in Christ, that he hath made thee free from thy sinnes, then shalt thou be deliuered and free from sinne. And this is the meaning of that which he sayth: Compell them to come in. It is not to be vnderstoode of outwarde compulsion, as some interprete it, that wicked and vngodly ones shoulde be violently driuen to the supper, for this preuayleth nothing, neyther is it so meant in this place. Wherefore it is to be referred onely to the conscience, and is inwarde and spirituall. Nowe he goeth on to speake to the seruaunt and the rest.

What it is to compell to come in.

For I say vnto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall tast of my supper. This is the conclusion, that they which thinke themselues most certaine that they shall come to the supper, and tast of it, shall not tast of it. The reason ye haue heard. Now briefly the guests that are bidden and do not come, are they, which thinke that they shall obtaine the supper by their owne workes, verie much wearying them selues, thinking assuredly, that they shall tast of it. But the Lord mightely concludeth and sayth: Not one of these men shall tast of my supper. Wherefore most gentle Lord? They haue committed no wicked thinge, neither haue bin occupied about vniust matters. Behold,

Why they that were bidden shall not tast of the supper.

this is the reason, for that they haue forsaken fayth, and haue not confessed it freely before euerie one, neither haue preferred that rich and sumptuous supper before all creatures. For seeing it is sumptuous, it requireth those men that do iudge it to be so, and do put any thinge in daunger, whatsoeuer it be, that they may be partakers of it. Thus ye haue the compendious meaning of this text, which I haue onely briefly runne ouer, if any will expound it more at large, I am well content he so do.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE WORKES OF CHARITIE.

Luke 6.

Vers. 36. IEsus said vnto his disciples: Be ye mercifull as your father also is mercifull.

37. Iudge not, and ye shall not be iudged: condemne not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgiue, and ye shalbe forgiuen.

38 Giue & it shalbe giuen vnto you: a good measure, pressed downe, shaken togither, and running ouer shall men giue into your bosom: for with what measure ye meate, with the same shal men meate to you againe.

39. And he spake a parable vnto them: Can the blynde lead the blynde? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40 The disciple is not aboue his maister: but whosoeuer wilbe a perfect disciple, shalbe as his maister.

41. And

41 And why ſeeſt thou a mote in thy brothers eye, and conſidereſt not the beame that is in thyne owne eye?

42 Either how canſt thou ſay to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou ſeeſt not the beame that is in thine owne eye? Hypocrite, caſt out the beame out of thine owne eye firſt, and then ſhalt thou ſee perfectly to pul out the mote that is in thy brothers eye.

THE workes of charitie which we muſt doe to our neighbours in temporall thinges and in corporall neceſſitie, are deſcribed vnto vs in this text: which the Lorde then declared, when he ſayde a litle before in the ſame chapter, that we muſt do well vnto our enemies, and beſtow benefits vpon them which hate vs: that we muſt bleſſe them that curſe vs: that we muſt pray for them which perſecute vs: if any man ſmite vs on the one cheeke, we muſt offer vnto him alſo the other: and if any man take away our cloke, we muſt not forbid him to take away our coate alſo. &c. All which he comprehending in a briefe ſumme, ſayth: Be ye mercifull, as your Father alſo is mercifull. Here ye ſee all good workes ſummarily deſcribed which we muſt exerciſe among our ſelues, as our heauenly father hath exerciſed them toward vs. Ye haue often times heard, that it is not needefull to do good workes toward God but toward our neighbours onely. God can be made neither ſtronger nor richer by our workes: but man may be ſtrengthened and enriched by them, vnto whom alſo they are neceſſarie, vnto whom onely they are to be directed, and not vnto God, which ye haue very often heard, and which is now in your eares: but would to God it would at the laſt burſt forth both into your handes and workes. Marke therefore how peruerſe an order it is, when any deale with God by workes, with whom notwithſtanding they muſt deale by onely faith, and when faith is directed vnto man, whereas it is to be placed in God alone. Turne theſe contrariwiſe, and they ſhalbe right, after this ſort: let vs firſt repoſe faith in God alone, and let vs then giue our

We muſt deale with God by faith and with our neighbours by good workes.

ſelues to ſerue our neighbours, and to direct all our workes ſo, that they may turne to their commoditie. We muſt deale before God by no other thing but by faith alone, becauſe none is able to helpe vs but God onely, & whatſoeuer we poſſeſſe either in mind or body, that commeth wholy to vs from God alone, in whom we ought to truſt, vpon whom we ought to ſet our harte. Nowe ſome vſe ſuche a prepoſterous order, that they repoſe faithe, which ought to haue reſpect to God onely, in them ſelues and others, they reſt vpon their traditions, and whatſoeuer their great maiſters haue inuented, in that they put their truſt. Of ſuch, God ſaith in Ieremie? My people haue done two euills: one, for that they haue forſaken me the well of the watet of life, and digged them pitts, yea vile and broken pitts that can holde no water: An other, for that thou dareſt ſay: I am without ſinne and giltles, tuſh, his wrath can not come vpon me: behold I will reaſon with thee, becauſe thou dareſt ſay, I haue not offended.

Iere.2.

First he ſayth, that his ſpouſe is turned into an harlot, and hath eſtraunged her ſelfe from God the fountaine of life, from whom life ſaluation & euery good thing floweth, him they haue forſaken. Secondly they ſet vp their owne traditions, and digge vnto them ſelues a fountaine of their owne, which can holde no water. So our Papiſtes truſt to their owne inuentions, to their founding of Maſſes, to their faſtinges, prayers, and ſuch like things. Which appeare to be as a fountaine, out of which they would draw life, and bleſſednes or ſaluation, when as notwithſtanding it is able to hold no water: they forſake God the fountaine of life. Afterward he ſayth: they dare riſe againſt me, that I ſhould not be angrie with them, alleging that their workes be iuſt, and they will goe to law with me. Beholde this is an other ſinne, that they goe about to defende their workes. Whereupon God alſo ſayth. I wil cõtend with thee in iudgemẽt, & wil ſhew how thou gaddeſt hither and thither to chaunge thy wayes. So faith pertaineth to God alone, whereunto it belongeth to obtaine all whatſoeuer things are neceſſary, as well temporall thinges as eternall, and ſo to obtaine them, that it thinke not that it hath merited in any thig. Alſo it muſt againe apply it ſelfe downward toward our neighbour, without looking for any recompenſe, not that bleſſednes conſiſteth in that deriuing of faith, to wit charity, for neither doth God require that, who will haue the conſcience

Faith obtaineth al good thinges of God.

to

to reſt onely in him: euen as the ſpouſe muſt cleaue onely to her huſbande and to no other: ſo alſo God requireth of vs that we truſt in him alone. Theſe things Chriſt declareth when he ſayth Be ye mercifull as your father is mercifull. Wherefore I muſt ſo order my conſcience toward God, that I vndoutedly beleeue, that I haue him a bountifull and mercifull father, as I will afterward declare, and that I alſo doe ſhew mercy toward my neighbour. Which faith muſt be inward, and caried vpward vnto God, but workes muſt be without, and deriued downward to our neighbours. After this ſort Abraham did, when at the mountaine in the countrie of Moria he aſcended to God, he left his ſeruaunts and aſſes below at the bottome of the mountaine, takinge onely Iſaac with him. The ſame muſt be done of vs if we will aſcend vnto God, that we may come to him with Iſaac onely, that is, with faith, ſeruaunts and aſſes, that is workes, are to be left below. Thus much for the entraunce of this text concerning faith and workes, to wit that fayth muſt pearce inward and vpward, but workes muſt goe without and downeward, wherby at the length it commeth to paſſe, that we are righteous before God and men, for that we giue due honour vnto God, and beleeue according to his word, and ſatiſfie our neighbour in the dutie of loue. Nowe let vs ſee the very wordes of the text in order.

Be ye mercifull as your Father is mercifull. Howe therefore is our heauenly father mercifull? after that ſort, that he giueth vs all good thinges, corporall and ſpirituall, tranſitorie and eternall, freely and of his mercy. For if he ſhould giue vnto vs according to our deſert, he ſhould giue vnto vs nothing but hell fire and eternall damnation. Whatſoeuer therefore good thinges he beſtoweth vpon vs, he beſtoweth them of his meere mercy. He ſeeth vs ſticke faſt in death, therefore he hath mercy vpon vs and giueth vs life: he ſeeth vs to be the children of hell, therefore he taking pitie vpon vs, giueth vnto vs heauen: He ſeeth vs to be miſerable and naked, hungrie and thirſty, it pitying him hereof, he clotheth vs, and refreſheth vs with meat & drinke, & maketh vs full of all good things: So what ſoeuer we haue either in body or in ſpirit, he giueth it vs of his meere mercy, without any merit or deſert of ours. Whereupon Chriſt here ſaith: Imitate your father, & be ye mercifull like vnto him. This

Howe our heauenly father is merciful toward vs

What kinde of mercy reason teacheth vs to vse.

is not simple mercy, such as reason teacheth, for that is greedy of her owne commoditie, which geueth onely to great and learned men, and to them that deserue it: it loueth them that be fayre and beautifull: it giueth vnto them, of whom it looketh for profit and commoditie againe, which is a mercy diuided, begging, and as it were torne and broken in peces. For if I shall giue to him that hath deserued, or if I shall regard fayrenes or friendship, it is a bergaine or det, and not mercy. Hereof Christ speaketh in the same chapter before this text in this wise: If ye loue them which loue you, what thanke shall ye haue? and if ye do good for them which do good for you, what thanke shall ye haue? for euen the sinners doe the same: and if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receiue, what thank shall ye haue? for euen the sinners lend to synners to receiue the like. But the mercie of Christians must not seeke her owne, but so behaue it selfe, that it be indifferent, that it regard all alike with open eyes, both friendes and foes, euen as our heauenly father doth.

Luc.6.

Where true mercy is not, neither is there any true faith.

And where soeuer this mercy is not, neither is there fayth also. For thy hart being setled in faith, so that thou knowest God to haue shewed himselfe thy God, so gentle and bountifull, without thy desert and of meere grace, when thou wast as yet his enemie, and the child of euerlasting malediction, thy hart I say being setled in this faith, thou canst not containe thy selfe, but that thou shew thy selfe againe so to thy neighbour, & that wholy for the loue of God, and for thy neighbours commodities sake. Take heede therefore what difference thou make betweene a friend and an enemie, betweene the worthy and vnworthy: for ye see all which are in this text rehearsed, to haue otherwise deserued of vs, then that we should loue them, or do well vnto them. And the same thing the Lord meaneth when he sayeth Luke 6. But loue your enemies, doe well vnto them, lend, looking for nothing againe, and your reward shalbe great, and ye shalbe the children of the most High: for he is kinde vnto the vnkinde and to the euell.

An obiection

But how commeth it to passe that a certain contrarie thing to ẏ which we haue taught seemeth to appeare in this text, where he sayth? Be ye merciful, as your heauẽly Father is mercifull: again, Iudge not, and ye shall not be iudged: condemne not, & ye shall not be condemned: forgiue and it shalbe forgiuen you. All

which

which authorities ſound ſo, that we muſt deale before God with our workes, and by them deſerue the mercie of God, when as notwithſtanding ye haue verie often heard, that fayth alone doth all? and both Paule and the whole Scripture doe commonly ſay and affirme, that we muſt beleeue in God alone, and deale by onely mere faith before him. It is requiſite here to vnderſtande that good workes are onely a ſetting forth and commendation of fayth, ſo that if I beleeue, I muſt be mercifull, I muſt not iudge nor condemne my neighbour, I muſt forgiue, and giue vnto mie neighbour. Whereof ſet an example before your ſelues. What did Abraham beeing commaunded to offer his ſonne? he obeyed the commaundement, and drew forth the ſword to kill his ſonne: what enſued thereupon? the Aungell of the Lord ſtayed him, ſaying: lay not thy hand vpon the child, neither do any thing vnto him: for now I know that thou feareſt God, foraſmuch as for my ſake thou haſt not ſpared thine onely ſonne. The anſwer. *Gen. 2.*

Howbeit this is here to be knowen and marked of vs, that we muſt firſt receaue, before we giue: before we ſhew mercy, we muſt receaue mercie of God: we do not lay the firſt ſtone, neither doth the ſhepe ſeeke the ſhepeheard, but the ſhepeheard the ſhepe. Wherefore ſo beſtow thy workes in euerie reſpect, that thou looke for nothing at Gods hand becauſe of them: for we obtaine euen euerie thing of God without merit or deſert: ſo God ſayth Eſay 65: I am found of them that ſeeke not for me, I haue appeared to them that aske not for me. And in the end of the ſame chapter: The time ſhall come (ſayth God) that or euer they call, I will aunſwere them, and while they are yet but thinking how to ſpeake, I will heare them. For in deede before we ſeeke him, he findeth vs, before we aſke him, he heareth vs. Likewiſe S. Paul ſaith Rom. 3. There is no difference: for all haue ſinned, and are depriued of the glorie of God, and are iuſtified freelie by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Ieſus: whō God hath ſet forth to be a recōciliatiō through faith in his bloud, to declare his righteouſnes, in that he forgiueth the ſinnes that are paſt, through the patience of God, to ſhewe at this time his righteouſnes, that he might be iuſt, and a iuſtifier of him which is of the faith of Ieſus. And in the chapter following he ſaith: Now to him that worketh the wages is not counted by fauoure but by debt: but to him that worketh not,

We muſt receaue mercy before we ſhew mercy.

We obtaine all good thinges of god through his meere mercy.

but beleeueth in him that iuſtifieth the vngodly, his faith is coũted for righteouſnes. For if it be of grace, it is no more of works, or els were grace no more grace, as he ſayth afterward in the eleuenth chapter.

Our good workes muſt be ſignes & teſtimonies of our ſincere faith.

Againe, I muſt beſtow my workes ſo, that they maye be a certaine ſigne, and as it were a ſeale grauen with letters, whereby I may be aſſured that my faith is ſyncere. For if I feele in my hart, that my worke proceedeth from loue, I am ſure concerning the integritie and ſoundnes of my fayth. If I forgiue, the ſame forgiuenes doth aſſure me concerning the ſinceritie of my fayth, doth declare my faith, and certifie me, that God hath alſo pardoned my ſynne, and doth daily more and more pardon me. So it fell out with Abraham, his worke made his faith knowen vnto him. God in deede knew that he did beleeue, but it behoued that Abraham alſo ſhould know, and ſhew forth his faith. Wherefore workes following onely freely as frutes of fayth, are declarations of ſuch a faith. For what ſhould it profite me, if I had euen a ſtrong fayth, but vnknowen vnto me? euen as if I ſhould haue a cheſt full of gold, yet I being ignoraunt thereof, ſhould take no commoditie thereby. But if any would ſhew it vnto me, he ſhould do me as great a pleaſure, as if he gaue it me. So if I haue faith and yet be ignoraunt thereof, it is no profit vnto me. Wherefore it muſt burſt forth, and be ſhewed by the workes that enſue, which are both ſignes and ſeales of the preſent fayth. So Sainct Peter meaneth, when ſpeaking of the workes of charitie, and the vertues of faith, he concludeth thus: Wherefore brethern, giue rather diligence, to make your calling and election ſure, which if ye do, ye ſhall not fall. For by this meanes an entering ſhalbe miniſtred vnto you aboũdantly into the euerlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt. He ſayth not, do good workes, that by them ye may be called, but that ye may more aſſure your ſelues of your calling. Accuſtome your ſelues therefore well vnto the phraſes and maner of ſpeakinges vſed in the Scripture, that ye ruſh not vpon them like blinde moules, and confirme workes in ſuch places as this: for herein works are to be reiected if we thinke, that we are iuſtified by them: but herein they are extolled and commended, in that they are profitable to our neighbour and frutes and ſignes of faith. Behold, it was meete that I ſhould make

2. Pet. 1. 18. 19

this

this digreſſion, leaſt I ſhould cõfirme the meaning of ỳ Papiſts.

Why God wil haue ſentences in the Scriptures which ſeeme contrarie.

Now if it ſhould be demaunded why God oftentimes ſetteth downe ſuch contrarie ſentences, and diſagreeing one with another, as it ſeemeth to vs & our reaſon, I aunſwere, that he may exerciſe vs in reading, and that we ſhould not thinke that we vnderſtand the whole Scripture, when we ſcarce vnderſtand one place. Some ſayinges do guide the ſpirit, how we ought to behaue our ſelues toward God, onely by fayth, as this: We are iuſtified freely. *Rom.3.24.* Againe leſt the body ſhould be ſluggiſh outwardly, there are ſentences alſo ſet forth vnto vs, which do guide and exerciſe the body, as theſe which we haue heard here rehearſed: Forgiue: and ye ſhalbe forgiuen: alſo where as Chriſt affirmeth that he will require workes in the laſt day, and will ſay after this ſort vnto the condemned, Mathew 25. I was an hungred, and ye gaue me no meat: I thirſted, & ye gaue me no drinke. I was a ſtraunger and ye tooke me not in vnto you: I was naked and ye clothed me not, &c. Which ſentences, whiles ignoraunt and light ſpirits labour to wreſt and applie to workes, they ſee not how great euell they commit. But ſpirituall men referre them to the very body onely, they them ſelues ſtanding naked before God in ſpirit, which is both iuſt and neceſſarie. For there are two thinges in man, the Spirit and the Fleſh. Hereupon there are ſome places which do guide onely fayth in the ſpirit: ſome which do direct onely workes in the body: for one place can not direct both the body and the ſpirite togither. We muſt ſo do with our ſubſtance, that we be willing to part from it, to lend, and to giue to our neighbour, when it ſhal be requiſit. And if we ſee any not to haue, wherewith to make reſtitution, we muſt releaſe him, and forgiue the dette according to the example of Nehemias, as we read in Eſdras.1.Eſdr.5. For God hath giuen many thinges vnto vs, who is able to giue vs moe thinges alſo if we beleeue. And thus we heare that if we will be Chriſtians, we ought to lend, giue, and to be willing to part from that which we haue, otherwiſe we ſhall not ſhew the fruites of a liuely fayth. Wherefore lay vp this text inwardly in your mindes, that ye deale by no other thing before God, but by onely fayth, and referre and beſtow your workes to the onely ſeruice and profit of your neighbour. Thus much ſhall ſuffice to haue bin ſpoken concerning the former part. Now what is to be ſayd moreouer of this text, or

what doth follow we will afterward consider. In the wordes following the Lord interpreteth himselfe, what kinde of mercy he vnderstandeth, saying after this sort.

Iudge not, and ye shall not be iudged: condemne not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgiue, and ye shalbe forgiuen: Giue, and it shalbe giuen vnto you. In this place the Lord diuideth mercy into three partes, that we maye not be ignoraunt, what maner of mercy that ought to be, which it behoueth vs to shew to our neighbours. First iudgement and condemnation is taken from vs. Then thou must forgiue thy neighbour if he hath committed any thing against thee. Lastly thou must helpe the needy. These thinges this word (Mercie) signifieth, where soeuer it cōmeth in the Scriptures. And all these must proceede from a syncere heart, all colouringe and flatterie being taken away, that there be no respect had of the person. For if thou desirest to wish well and to wish well to them, which will well to thee: or to do well to them, which doe well to thee: or to hurt them, which hurt thee, thou art vtterly deceiued. But thou must do so, as Christ sayth a litle before: Imitate thy heauenly father, loue thine enemie: do wel to him, which doth euel to thee: forgiue him that hurteth thee: lend to the needy, and so of the rest. That therefore we may speake of the former part, that we must not iudge or condemne, we must marke, that God hath ordained the sword of the magistrate, to the punishing of publike offences, so that it be prouided that it be not done against the precept and commaundemēt of God, as that ỹ innocent be not executed: For wheras the iudge dealeth vniustly, he is as well an homicide as an other, of which iudgement Christ sayth nothing here. Els where he maketh mētion thereof, when as he said to him, which desired that he would byd his brother deuide the inheritance with him: Who made me a iudge or a diuider ouer you? For the care & gouerning of outward thinges do not belong to the kingdome of Christ.

Three partes of mercy.

The first part of mercy not to iudge or condemne an other.

Luk. 12. 14.

But Christ speaketh here of an other iudgement, namely of that whereby one reputeth and compteth an other good or euell, when as notwithstanding he seeth no good or euell to be done of him. Which iudgement belongeth only vnto God. For it may be that thou see thy brother offend to day, whom notwithstanding to morow God doth receiue, thē may be both be, and also seeme vnto thee to be good, neither must thou remember his synnes, for

Of what iudgdment Christ speaketh in this place.

that

that Christ hath forbidden. For there can not be either any loue, or concord, where this iudgement and condemnation is vsuall amongst men. To iudge & condemne an other is nothing els, then to haue a beame in his own eye, which al hypocrites do without dout beare in their eyes. For they that iudge themselues good, are offended at their brother, what soeuer others do, it displeaseth them, forasmuch as they will not acknowledge their owne synne. But it commeth to passe, that when thou seest many sinnes in others, thou seest not the beame that is in thine owne eye, and so fallest into the iudgement of God. Herof it commeth, that thou which iudgest an other, art made worse thē ỹ most wicked baude, or the most vnchast harlot, before God, who alone knoweth who is to be saued, and who to be condemned. Such hypocrites are of tha: nature that it is a pleasure vnto them, and they take no smal delight thereof, if they reason and talke either of the adulterie or fault of an other man, yea they increase a small thing or trifle in their neighbour, and what soeuer others do, they interpret it at the worst, so that no mā is able to do that which pleaseth or liketh them. And although they themselues do not such things, yet they willingly heare that other men do them, whereas a godly man helpeth as much as he is able, that these thinges may be couered and amended. But it many times falleth out that they are most filthie adulterers euen according to the flesh, which do so iudge and condemne others, howbeit they doe not iudge man onely, but euen God himselfe. Wherefore if thy brother be a sinner, cōceale his synne, and pray for him to the Lord: if thou reueale his sinne and reioyce therat, surely thou art not the child of the mercifull father, for if thou were, thou wouldest be mercifull according as he is. This is a thing most certaine, that we are not able to shew so great mercy to our neighbour, as God both hath & doth shew to vs. But that is the practize of Satan, that we do those things which are quite cōtrarie vnto mercy, which is an vndouted signe, that there is no mercy at all in vs.

Iudgers of other.

Of these iudgers of other Christ speaketh in the Gospell whē he sayth: Can the blinde lead the blinde? shall they not both fal into the ditch? The disciple is not aboue his maister: but who soeuer wilbe a perfect disciple, shalbe as his maister. And why seest thou a mote in thy brothers eye, and considerest not the beame, that is in thine owne eye? either how canst thou say to *Luk.6.39.*

thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, whē thou ſeeſt not the beame that is in thine own eye? Hypocrite, caſt out the beame that is in thine owne eye firſt, & thē ſhalt thou ſee perfectly to pull out the mote that is in thy brothers eye. **As if he ſaid: thou thinkeſt that thy brother is blinde & in thy minde doeſt finde fault with an other, ỳ is, thou wilt guide an other whē notwſtāding thou thy ſelfe art blind. Thou iudgeſt him a ſynner, & thy ſelfe an honeſt & iuſt man. What other thing is this, thē for thy heart to be ſo affected, that thou count thy ſelfe better? Which is nothing els, then that thou wilt lead & guide other, when thou thy ſelfe art blinder thē a moule, ſo that he which foloweth thee, doth fall with thee into the ditch. Of ſuch as iudge themſelues to excell others, & thinke themſelues to be followed more thē ỳ word of God, S. Paul ſpeaketh Rom. 2.** Behold (ſaith he) thou art called a Iew, & reſteſt in the law, & glorieſt in God & knoweſt his will, and trieſt the thinges that diſſent from it, in that thou art iuſtified by the law, & perſwadeſt thy ſelfe, that thou art a guide of the blinde a light of them which are in darknes, an inſtructer of them that lacke diſcretō, a teacher of the vnlearned, which haſt the forme of knowledge, & of the truth in the law. Thou therfore which teacheſt an other, teacheſt thou not thy ſelfe? thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteale, doeſt thou ſteale? thou that ſayeſt A man ſhould not cōmit adulterie, doeſt thou cōmit adulterie? thou that abhorreſt idols, cōmitteſt thou ſacrilege? thou that glorieſt in the law, through breaking the law, diſhonoreſt thou God? **Wherupō he alſo ſaith in the beginning of the ſame chapter to hypocrites:** Therefore thou art inexcuſable, O man, whoſoeuer thou art, that cōdemneſt: for in that thou condemneſt an other, thou condemneſt thy ſelfe: for thou that condemneſt doeſt the ſame thinges. But we know that the iudgement of God is according to truth, againſt them which commit ſuch things. And thinkeſt thou this, O thou man that condēneſt thē which do ſuch things, & doeſt the ſame, that thou ſhalt eſcape the iudgement of God? **Loe, this is to ſpeake ỳ truth to hypocrites, who go about to ſhew ỳ way to other, which they themſelues know not, leading ſo other mē into ỳ ditch with thē. Therfore ỳ Lord ſaith:** The diſciple is not aboue his maiſter but who ſoeuer wilbe a perfect diſciple, ſhalbe as his maiſter, **This is a common prouerbe: I can learne no more of my maiſter**

then

then he knoweth him selfe. Wherefore doth the Lord speake this prouerbe? because of two sortes of maisters: the one is blynde, whom if I shall follow, I also my selfe shall become blynde: he himselfe falleth into the ditch, and I follow. The other maister is the mercifull father, of whom we must learne mercy: whom if we follow, we also do become mercifull like as he is: if we were mercifull dayly, we should also become perfect, as he is perfect, but that commeth not to passe, as long as we are in this life.

The second part of mercy is, that we forgiue them which haue endamaged vs, or hurt vs by any meanes. A Christian can neuer be so hurt, but he ought to forgiue, not onely seuen times, but seuenty times seuen times, as the Lord sayd vnto Peter. Matth. 18. Wherefore God forgiueth a Christian his synne or infirmitie, that he may also forgiue other their infirmitie: which Christ setteth forth els where in a most goodly parable, which he cõcludeth in these wordes: So likewise shall mine heauenly Father do vnto you, except ye forgiue from your hearts, ech one to his brother their trespasses. And so we praye daily in the Lords prayer, with an addition saying: forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespasse against vs. Is this a hard matter, if I a wretched synner, do forgiue my neighbour his trespasses and his infirmitie, whereas the Lord will forgiue me my synnes and my infirmities? If one had killed my father, what were this being compared to my sinne, wherwith I haue offended God, and prouoked him to anger?

The second part of mercy, to forgiue

Mat. 18. 35.

The third part of mercy is, that we giue to them that be in misserie and neede, and that we helpe them. Whereof Iohn speaketh thus 1. Iohn 3. Whosoeuer hath this worldes good, and seeth his brother haue neede, and shutteth vp his compassion from him, how dwelleth the loue of God in him? For where the loue of God is, it is moued to shew it selfe euẽ in outward workes. Hereunto also pertaineth the saying of Christ Matth. 5. Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy. Wherefore the Lord addeth a promise in the Gospel, saying: Giue and it shalbe giuen vnto you: a good measure, pressed downe, shaken togither, & running ouer shall men giue into your bosome. And cõtinuing on his speech he sayth: For with what measure ye meat, with the same shall men meat to you againe. Thus much shall suffice concerning the partes of mercy which we ought to shew

The third part of mercy, to giue to the poore & needy.

to our neighbours. Unto which the ſpeciall wordes of Chriſt ought to exhort vs, who when in the Goſpell of Matthew he had ſpoken much of a Chriſtian life, and of loue to be ſhewed to our brethren, thus concludeth ſaynge: What ſoeuer ye would that men ſhould do to you, euen ſo do ye to them: for this is the Law & the Prophets. Now euerie one is ſo affected, that being caſt downe, and in diſtres, he would wiſh all the world to helpe him. If I be a miſerable ſinner, drowned in ſinnes, bearing a burdened and troubled conſcience, I would that the whole world ſhould comfort me, ſhould helpe and ſuccour me, ſhould couer my ſinne and ſhame. So I alſo ought to behaue my ſelfe toward my neighbour, not to iudge him, not to condemne him, but to forgiue him his offences, to helpe him, to prouide for him, to lend vnto him, & giue him, euen as I would wiſh to be done vnto my ſelfe if I were driuen into diſtres, neceſſitie, exile, or pouertie. And herein truly Chriſtians are knowne, if they loue one an other, if one do ſuch workes of mercy vnto an other, as Chriſt ſayd vnto his diſciples at his laſt Supper. I giue vnto you a new cōmaundemēt, that ye loue one an other, as I haue loued you. By this ſhal all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye haue loue one to an other. Thus ye haue the meaning of this text, it remaineth that we call vpon God for his grace.

Mat. 7. 12.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE SVMME OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

1. Tim. 1.

Verſe. 5. The end of the commaundement is loue out of a pure heart, and of a good conſcience, and of fayth vnfained.

6. From

6. From the which thinges ſome haue erred, and haue turned vnto vaine iangling.
7 They would be doctours of the Lawe, and yet vnderſtād not what they ſpeake, neither whereof they affirme.

IT is well knowen vnto you dearely beloued bꝛethꝛen, with how great ſeueritie God hath commaunded his wozd to be heard and learned. Foꝛ he moſt highly eſteemeth it, and hath beſtowed much labour in defending it, and publiſhing it to the wozld. He hath ſuffered all the Pꝛophets to come into perils and daungers, at the laſt alſo he ſent his owne ſonne becauſe of his wozde, whom he ſuffered to die euen the death of the croſſe. And what perſecutions haue not the Apoſtles themſelues abode foꝛ the wozdes ſake? what afflictions haue not all Chꝛiſtians ſuffered? vnto ſome of which he hath committed the miniſterie of his wozd faythfully to be executed, and to other ſome hath enioyned the charge of hearing the ſame. If there were no other cauſe beſide this, wherby we might be moued to heare and learne Gods wozd, but foꝛ that it is the good pleaſure, will, and commaundement of God, yet this one ought to be ſufficient great & weighty. Foꝛ it is our dutie as creatures to obey our Lozde and Creatoꝛ, and that with all readines of minde, inaſmuch as he hath giuen vs ſo many good thinges, and doth as yet dayly giue vs moe, foꝛ which we ſhall neuer be able to giue him ſufficient wozthie thankes. Gods word muſt be heard and learned.

Howbeit he is not content, onely to haue commaunded vs to do this, oꝛ to require it of vs as bounden duty, but pꝛomiſeth alſo that great frutes and commodities ſhall redound to vs thereby, affirming that by this meanes his greateſt and higheſt wozſhip is giueu vnto him. Foꝛ he is the great Lozd, whom we ſerue, who hath many and diuers kindes of ſeruice, and manifold maners of wozſhip, and whom we may ſerue diuers wayes. But this onely ſeruice which is giuen to him by hearing the wozd, doth excell all the reſt. Foꝛ if any where a faithfull man of the countrie, oꝛ a citizen, oꝛ any which is otherwiſe in ſubiection doth ſerue his Lozde oꝛ maiſter, he doth by the ſame ſeruice alſo ſerue God. Likewiſe a childe, a manſeruaunt oꝛ a mayd ſeruaunt, if they be God is ſerued diuers waies, but eſpecially by preaching & hearing his word.

obedient, and do diligently that which belongeth to their dutie: also a Prince and parents if they gouerne well, and do their dutie faithfully: they all doe serue God. For it is his will and commaundement which he requireth to be fulfilled of vs. Of such seruices and kindes of worship the world is full. For to euerie one in his state his workes are committed and enioyned of God, whereby he daily both ought and may serue him: that there may be left no place for excuse vnto any man, as though he were ignoraunt how, and wherefore he must serue God, neither that any seeke after other thinges, and inuent peculiar maners of seruing God, which he hath neither ordained nor commaunded, and in the meane season neglect that which he hath commaunded, as we haue hitherto done in our blindnes.

But before all other seruices and doinges of duties, he hath most highly esteemed and extolled this seruice both of them that heare, and them that preach his word. And therefore hath ordained also a speciall day thereunto euerie weeke, in which we must apply our selues to no other busines: Albeit we serue God also by other labours all the weeke, which he hath bound to no time or certaine daye. But he hath chosen this daye specially, which he hath seuerely commaunded to be kept, whereby men maye haue time and leasure to performe this seruice, lest any might flie vnto this complaint, that he hath no leasure by reason of his labours and busines. Moreouer he hath appointed speciall places also for his seruice, as among vs temples and houses, where we doe come togither. Yea he hath instituted and kept the whole order of ministers hereunto, giuing also other thinges which pertaine to the performing of the charge of this office, as the knowledge of manye tongues, and diuers gyftes besyde. And briefely he hath commaunded the whole worlde by a certaine speciall precept that it thinke this worship or seruice holy, and farre more excellent then the rest. Which he will haue so to be delighted in of all Christians, that it maye be manifest, howe much he doth esteeme it, and howe acceptable vnto him the exercise and handlinge of his word is.

God hath appointed time place, person and what so euer is requisite that his word may be preached & heard.

These thinges I speake to stirre you vp, and to admonish you, whye ye ought willingly to heare the word of God, because it is not only the commaundement of God, whereunto we must obey, but

Most weightie causes which ought

but we haue also most ample promises, that it is a thinge acceptable to God, and the greatest worship, whereby we can doe honour vnto him. And it so farre exceedeth other kindes of worship, as the brightnes of the sunne exceedeth the brightenes of the other starres, and the Sabboth day the other dayes, & in a summe, as much as the heauenly kingdom excelleth the kingdoms of the worlde. For here all thinges are holy and specially chosen, the time, place, person, and that because of the worde, which sanctifieth all thinges vnto vs. Wherefore we must earnestly endeuour, that we take heede vnto our selues, that we fall not into sluggishnes, & slothfulnes, neither that we be caried away with contempt and lothsomnes of hearing the word, as those delicate and cloyed spirits, which seeme vnto them selues already to be Maisters, and exactly to know all thinges, yea farre more perfectly then any can teache them. Or as others also, which are soone cloyed with it thinking, why I haue heard this very often, wherefore should I eftsoones heare the same songe? They knowe not howe great & meruelous a thing it is, also howe great worship of God, which they do so greatly contemne, & neglect with so great slothfulnes. Wherefore they doe after vnspeakeable meanes prouoke God to wrath, hauing his commaundement so in contempt, and suffering his promise to be mad voide in them, and as much as is in them impayring and hindering by their example so commendable a worship and seruice of God.

to moue vs to heare Gods word.

But admit it to be true, which notwithstanding is not, that thou doost vnderstand all thinges perfectly, and as cunningly and skilfully as Christ him selfe: yet thou seest how earnestly he performeth the office of preaching, and applyeth him selfe vnto this worke, whereof notwithstanding he was most skilful before, and had not any whit neede thereof, as we doe greatly neede it. So Paule also a Prince of Apostles, albeit he was exceedingly well learned, & so excellent a Doctour, yet going through many countries did eftsoones and euery where preach, neither was he wearied or cloyed. Wherefore it is meete that thou be nothing at all wearie of hearing this worde, inasmuch as the ayde and helpe therof is exceeding necessary for thee, both against the deuill and all other tentations. And although for thy instruction thou shouldest not need it, yet oughtest thou not to be wearied or cloyed, ỳ thou shouldest not bestowe a fewe howres in a day euery weeke

We must not be wearie of hearing the word of God

vpon this worship and seruice of God: seeing that before, applying thy selfe to false worship, when thou didst passe the whole day in temples, and didst runne from temple to temple, from altar to altar, thou feltest no tediousnes or wearines, neither didst say as thou doost at this day: O, I haue heard no new thinge, I haue heard these thinges before: But didst thinke thus: this day and yesterday I went to heare Masse, and to morow I mind to goe to heare it againe. How much more oughtest thou to doe this now, knowing assuredly that this is the right seruice and worship of God, for to say? Albeit I knew most perfectly, as I doe not know, yet to giue honour and shew obedience vnto God, I will doe this seruice, and because of his loue and prayse I will beare his word, that my Lord may see by this chiefe worship, wherewith I am especially delighted, that I am willing to serue him. For although no other fruite or profit come vnto me thereby, yet I may reioyce that I haue performed a most holy and acceptable worke vnto him, whereunto other kindes of worships and seruices being compared, are of small importaunce.

Now, he that doeth not care for these things, neither is moued with them, reuerently to thinke and highly to esteme of the word of God, willingly and earnestly to heare and learne it, whensoeuer oportunitie and meanes shall be offered, I will haue nothing to do with him. For neither may I, neither will I draw any man hereunto violently. He that contemneth, let him contemne still, and remaine a swine as he is, euen vntill that day, when God wil kill him and throw him downe hedlong to hel. For such a one can not be a good man, neither is it a humaine sinne, but a certaine deuilish obstinacie, so greatly to contemne that, whereunto God hath appointed a place, person, time, &c. Whereunto moreouer he moueth vs by his commaundement, louingly prouoketh vs by his promises, stirreth vs vp and admonisheth vs by wordes, and offereth all these of his owne accorde, and to be bought with no price or treasure, which is to be farre fetched, or hardly come by, the excellencie whereof can in deede be counteruailed with no gold. Adde hereunto moreouer that it is a worship or seruice verie easie to be done, which may be performed without all labour or griefe, but that thou must attentiuely heare the Preacher, or apply thy mouth to speake and read, then which labour none surely is more easie. And albeit it is to be feared, that thou shalt there-

A deuillish obstinacie to contemne the hearinge of Gods Word.

fore

fore beare the crosse, and suffer persecution, yet the worke it selfe is so ioyned with no difficultie, as no other labour is, no not euen that that is most easie. If so be that it be not grieuous vnto thee, to sit the whole day in a tauerne or an alehouse, or otherwise w thy companions to trifle and sporte thy selfe with filthy and vnseemely gestes and pastimes, also to singe and prate, and yet art not wearie, neither feelest any labour: thou mayst with as litle paine sit in the temple, and heare the Preacher, whereby thou seruest God, and doest that which is acceptable vnto him. What wouldest thou doe, if thou shouldest at his commaundement carie stones in quarries, or goe armed on pilgrimage to S. Iames? or if some other laborious and painefull worke should be enioyned thee? as hitherto it hath bene the custome among vs, when as we would doe all thinges willingly, whatsoeuer was enioyned vs, when we were deceiued with mere trifles, and most impudent delusions.

But so doth the Deuill blinde men: in whom also he worketh a satietie and lothing of the word of God, whereby it commeth to passe that they haue no regard, what a treasure the word of God is, but liue after a beastly sort, contemning all good doctrine. Let vs therfore at the last, delight in these things, thinking thus with our selues, that as often as we reade or heare the word of God either priuatly or publikely, of whom soeuer it be preached, we apply our selues to the chiefe seruice of God, which pleaseth God exceedingly well. After this sort thou mayst inflame thy selfe to heare, and God will inspire thee with his grace, that the seed of his word, be not sowne in vaine, but may bring forth plentifull frute. For the word is neuer taught without frute, whensoeuer it shal be diligently and attentiuely heard, neither can it be, but that by eftsones hearing it, thou shouldest become better. And albeit for the present time thou seest or feelest no frute, yet in processe of time thou shalt plainly perceiue & feele it. But it were longe here to rehearse the frutes proceding of the word, nay, in deede they can not be all rehearsed.

God maketh the seede of his word fruitefull in the diligent hearers therof.

These thinges I thought good to speake in steede of a preface before the words of S. Paule, to the intent to stirre vs vp more diligently to heare the worde of God: and surely there is greate neede of such an exhortation dayly in euery sermon, which also is much pertinent vnto the text which we presently haue in hande.

Exhortation to the hearing of Gods word very needefull.

For Paule in this place reprehendeth curious spirits, which go about by their owne wisedom to be maisters of the word of God, and doe by and by falsely perswade them selues, that they knowe it well, and that they neede not any more the help of any teacher: but turne them selues to triflinge and vaine iangling, that they may bring forth some new thing, which the common sort may be desirous to heare, presuming also to be Maisters of the Scripture and of all men, labouring to teach euery one, and yet not vnderstanding what they speake, or whereof they affirme. For this is a plague and calamitie that followeth, where the word of God is not handled diligently and seriously, the learners being wearie of hearing and the teachers slouthful in preaching. Herof it commeth that so great companies of hearers slide away, and Churches become desolate. Of which calamitie vaine talkinge spirits are the cause, which promise new thinges, that they may winne the hartes of the multitude vnto them selues, boasting that they are Maisters of the Scripture, and yet are alwayes such men as are ignorant, forasmuch as they haue neuer tried, what it is to teach other: which we doe now plainely see, and the wrath of God is at hand ready to punish our contempt and vnthankefulnes. Therefore Paule beginneth his Epistle to his Disciple Timothe so, that he should take heede, that such teachers doe not arise, which can talke many thinges of the lawe, bringing many new questions and doctrines, what is to be done, how righteousnes is to be obtained, all which they do for ostentation sake, that they may be seene and praysed, and seeme to be more learned then other, and yet they neuer came so farre as to teach any certayne thinge, or that which might be counted to be of any importance, but doe all thinges confusedly and out of good order. Such babblers vse onely these wordes, that we must be honest, that good workes must be done, and God must be serued, &c. but they vnderstand not the sense of those wordes, what they meane. And being asked how we must doe good workes, nowe they teach this particular worke to be done, an other time an other worke, as, offer so much sacrifice at this altar, get thee into this or that Monasterie, runne vnto this Sainct, here erect a chappell to the honour of such a Sainct, in an other place found a Masse, light tapers, eate fishe, buy indulgences, &c. Which being done, they by and by bringe an other worke, and forthwith after that an other.

Vaine & curious teachers.

So

So they know not how to instruct any after a constant & certayn maner of teaching, much lesse can they say, this is, or in this doth the summe of Christian life consist, &c. And yet in the meane season those thinges must be counted very excellent that they teach, so much doe they boast, and promise almost golden mountaynes, as though they alone were Doctors that might not be gainsaid, and controulers and Maisters of all other.

But he is to be counted an excellent Maister, and highly to be esteemed, which teacheth the chiefe point and whole summe of doctrine, to wit, how the hart and conscience, yea and the whole man must liue. They know nothing of that thing, although they be very full of wordes, but doe altogither erre from the summe & principall point of the lawe. In the meane season they intangle the mindes of ỹ hearers with such a confused company of words, that they know neither how to make a beginning nor end of speaking, and it is uncertaine whereunto that disordered company of wordes doth serue, whereby no man can be made better, much lesse can he confirme his conscience thereby, as we hitherto haue enough and too much seene and tried in the Papacie amonge our Preachers of dreames. What therefore is the summe of that doctrine, which is to be taught to the people? Sainct Paule answereth:

> The ende of the commaundement is loue out of a pure hart, and of a good conscience, and of faith vnfeyned.

This is that Helen, here thou hast the summe of Christian life most excellently and fully comprehended, compendiously and briefly uttered, and which may be, not unfitly printed in thy memorie. Thou must endeuour, if thou wilt not erre from the law, but attaine to the chiefe point therof (that thou mayst know what is to be done and what to be left undone) to haue loue proceeding out of a pure hart, from a good conscience, and faith unfeyned. If thy loue be of this sort, thē is it right, otherwise thou errest from the meaning of the whole law. Now these wordes are profound, and comprehend much matter in them: Wherefore we must partly expound them, that they may be the better understood, and that we may accustō our selues to Pauls maner of speach. First he attributeth to loue the summe of the whole lawe, wherein is

The summe of Christian life.

What it is to loue.

wholy consisteth. And to loue is nothing els (as I thinke it is knowne to all) but to fauour and embrace one from the hart, and to shewe and perfoyme vnto him all the duties of friendship and good will. Nowe those iangling Doctors also vse such wordes, preaching and boasting many thinges of loue, but all by peece meale and particularly applyed to their owne trifles and follies. Euen as heretikes, wicked men, and vngratious wretches haue loue also, but that which consisteth onely amonge them selues, & them that are of the same sorte with them, in the meane season they hate and persecute all good Christians, whom they would willingly accuse of murder, if they could, &c. But this doth not yet deserue to be called true loue, if I choose one or two, whose conditiõs like & please me, whõ I do friendly & louingly embrace, & no man beside them. It is called a particular loue, which proceedeth not out of a pure hart, but from an infected and filthie hart.

Loue flowing out of a pure hart.

For true loue floweth out of a pure hart, when I endeuour as God hath commaunded me, to poure forth my loue toward my neighbour, and to fauour all without difference, whether they be friendes or enemies, euen as our heauenly father him selfe doth, who suffereth his Sunne to arise on the good and euill, and sendeth his raine to the thankfull and vnthankfull, maketh the earth to bring forth many good thinges, giueth money, riches, frutes, cattell, and many times especially vnto them that are the worst of al other. But from whence commeth ỹ doing of these thinges? truely from pure loue, whereof his hart is most ful. This he poureth forth abundantly vpon all, omitting no man, whether he be good or euil, worthy or vnworthy. And this is called true diuine, entire, and perfect loue, which loueth no one, neglecting the rest, neither cutteth or diuideth it selfe, but embraceth all indifferently. The other is loue of theeues and Publicanes, if I loue him, which is for my turne, and may doe me a pleasure, and which esteemeth well of me, and despise him that contemneth me, and which is not on my side. For that doth not proceede from the hart which ought wholy to be good and pure, indifferently toward all, but he that is endued with such loue, seeketh his owne thinges, & is full of loue of him selfe, and not of loue toward others. Neither doth he loue any man, but for his owne commodities sake, regarding onely that, which may serue for his owne vse, seeking his owne profit by euery man, and not the profit of his neighbour. If

Loue that proceedeth not from a pure harte of what sort it is.

he

he be prayſed & honoured, he laugheth, but being looked vpon with lower countenaunce, or an vnthankfull word being ſpoken vnto him, he ſtomaketh, curſeth & findeth fault, ſo that all friendſhip forthwith ceaſeth. Contrariwiſe he that hath a pure hart muſt be ſo affected according to the worde of God, and his example, that he fauour euery one, and beſtow liberall and friendly benefits vpon them, euen as God hath fauoured him, and of his diuine loue hath beſtowed benefits vpon him.

We muſt not therefore abſtaine frō doing well to any becauſe he is our enemy or euil.

But ſome man will ſay, he is myne enemie, and doth euill vnto me. Surely he is an enemie alſo to God, vnto whom he doth many moe thinges diſpleaſant vnto him, then he can do either to me or thee. But therefore my loue ought not to be extinguiſhed or ceaſſe, becauſe he is euill, and altogither vnworthy thereof. If he be euill, he ſhall at the laſt ſuffer puniſhment according to his deedes, but his wickednes muſt not ouercome me. But if I can through loue rebuke and admoniſh him, or pray for him, that he may amend, and eſcape puniſhment, I muſt do it readily: I muſt not be an enemie vnto him, or doe euill vnto him in any wiſe. For what profit ſhould redound vnto me thereby? neither am I made better thereby, and I make him ſo much the worſe. This therefore ought to delight me, if I ſhall fauour him, and beſtowe benefits vpon him, if ſo be that he will ſuffer them to be beſtowed on him, and pray vnto God for him, ſo I may enioy peace, and haue no trouble or contention with any man, and perhaps I may ſo profit him, that he wil change his life vnto the better, and amend. Otherwiſe ſurely loue being diuided or ſeparated, I haue more bitternes and ſorow by them, whom I hate, then I haue ioy and profit by them, whom I loue and keepe companie with. And this is ſayd to trouble the fountaine or water, from whence pure loue can not flowe. As it is certaine that the Iewes alſo did, againſt whom Paule ſpeaketh in this place: for they loued them onely of whom they were loued, whereby they defiled the ſyncerite of loue with mans affections, and therefore their hart could not be pure.

Wherby the hart is purified.

But whereby is the hart purified? I anſwere, it can not be purified by any other thing better, then by that ſoueraine puritie, which is the worde of God. Receiue that into thy minde, & order thy life according to the rule thereof, and thy hart is purified. As in this place, ſee thou ſet the worde before thee, Thou ſhalt loue

thy neighbour as thy selfe. & follow that which it commaundeth, and by and by thou shalt see whether it purgeth & clenseth whatsoeuer desire there is in thee of thyne owne profit, or whatsoeuer loue of thy selfe. For commaunding thee to loue thy neighbour, it maketh exception of none, either friend, or foe. Albeit some man be euill and hath bene oftentimes iniurious vnto thee, notwithstanding he doth not therefore lose this name, that he is not to be called thy neighbour, but neuertheles remaineth thy flesh and blood, and is comprehended in these wordes, thou shalt loue thy neighbour &c. Therefore I say if thou shalt consider him and so behaue thy selfe toward him, as ỹ word teacheth thee, then is thy hart made pure, and loue sincere, so that thou makest no false difference of persons, neither otherwise considerest him, then an other, which is good, and one of thy familiars. In deede we can not deny this to be true, that an honest man is more worthy to be loued, vnto whom also euery one doth more willingly applye himselfe by nature, then vnto the conuersation of wicked men, whose familiaritie there is no good man that doth not abhorre, howbeit flesh and bloud is the cause that true and Christian loue is not among vs. For a Christian must not deriue his loue from the person, as the world doth: as some yong man seeing a maide, is in loue with her because of her fayrenes and beautie, and a couetous man taketh his loue and desire of his money, a Lorde or Prince of honour and power, &c. For all such loue is sayde to be feyned and proceeding not from whence it ought, cleauing to the good thinges, wherewith he seeth the person adorned, neither doth it continue any longer, then that which he loueth, continueth, and as long as he may enioy it.

True loue.

But true loue ought to be such as floweth out of a continuall fountaine, and proceedeth from the bottom of the heart, as a fresh and continuall water alwayes springing forth, which can not be stopped, and is neuer dryed vp. This loue sayth after this sort: I loue thee, not for thy honestie or dishonestie, for I doe not deriue my loue from thy honestie, as from a strange fountaine, but out of myne owne fountaine, that is, out of the word of God which is planted in my hart, which commaundeth me to loue my neighbour. From hence loue plentifully floweth ope to al, which haue neede thereof, watering all both friendes and foes: yea chiefly prepared and ready for foes, inasmuch as thy haue more neede, that

that they may by my meanes be brought to amendment, I praying for them, and doing according to my ability that which I am able, that they also leauing their euill wayes, may be deliuered from sinnes, and the snares of the Deuill. And this is sayd to be loue flowing from the hart, and not deriued from without: for he that is endued with such loue, findeth no such thinge in him whom he loueth, from whence he should derive it. But because he is a Christian, because he layeth hold of the word, which is altogether pure by it selfe, by the power of it his hart also is made pure and replenished with true loue. Whereupon he powreth forth the treasures of his loue toward euery man, neither is he moued or turned awaye with the person of any, whether he be good or euill. Behold, thus should they preach, which will rightly teach loue required of the lawe, whereof our bablers knowe nothing, neither haue any regard therof, albeit they talke many thinges of the lawe, and dispute much of loue. They doe not see, no they doe not so much as once thinke, that loue must be such, that it flow out of the hart, & that the fountaine must be first pure and cleare. This neuer descended into their hart, although they heare, read, and teach many things of it. They are occupied with very vncertaine, and vnprofitable cogitations, yea rather with dead dreames.

Wherefore whatsoeuer is preached of workes and of a good life, that onely is well done which proceedeth from the worde of God, a pure hart, and a true faith. This thou mayst see in all states, how euery one ought in his calling to doe the office inioyned him, and exercise the workes of loue. A seruaunt labouring, & thinking no more then thus: My Lorde or maister payeth me my wages, for which onely I serue him, otherwise I would not vouchsafe to looke vpon him, &c. hath not a pure hart, for he doth not serue, but for a peece of bread, or for his hyre, which being taken away, his seruice also ceaseth. But if he were a right & true Christian, he would rather be thus affected: I will not therefore serue, because my Maister payeth me wages, because he is honest or vnhonest, &c. but therefore, because the word of God doth thus speake vnto me: Seruaunts be obedient vnto your Maisters as vnto Christ, &c. This seruice proceedeth of it owne accord out of the hart, which layeth hold on the word and greatly esteemeth it, saying: I wil serue my Maister, and take my wages,

True good workes.

How a good seruaunt ought to be affected.

Ephes. 6.5.

but this shal be the chiefest thing, for which I do this seruice, that I may serue my God and Lord Iesus Christ, who hath layd the condition and state of a seruaunt vpon me, which I knowe doth please him in me, &c. Here thou seest a true worke proceeding out of a pure hart. So also let a Lord or Prince, & they which haue the charge of gouerning ỳ common weale, thinke thus: God hath committed vnto me the office of a Magistrate, that I should be a ruler: now if I will haue regard vnto this onely, that I may enioy my dignitie, riches, and power, it is certaine that my hart is not pure, and yet in the meane season I doe the works of a ruler, so, that the world can not complaine of me, neither Cesar, or the Lawyers can blame or finde fault with me by their lawes. Euen as neither a seruaunt seruing only for wages can be reprehended of the world, whether he seeketh his owne thinges or not. Surely the worde of God is not regarded in the office of a ruler that doth so, but his owne idoll, his owne glorie, money and power &c.

How ỳ hart of a godly Magistrate ought to be affected.

But if this affection be in his hart: because I am occupied in this office, wherein God hath placed me, and the word commaundeth him that beareth rule to be carefull, it is meete that I doe execute the same with al faithfulnes and diligence, to the praise and glory of my God: The execution of the office of such a ruler endued with such a mind, commeth out of a pure and sincere hart, wherewith both God and good men are delighted. There is moreouer in him loue, which doth not cleaue to ỳ person or outward things, but beginneth in the hart, which the worde of God maketh manifest, which forasmuch as it is pure & cleane, doth also purifie the hart. And so his gouernment and workes are the mere seruices of God, & most acceptable sacrifices vnto him, seeing that they are done onely according to the word of God, and for God his sake. But our talkers can not teach this, neither are able to iudge of it, only crying out when they teach best of al, that we must be honest. They bring a certaine iuridiciall sermon out of the lawes of men, as Cesar and his clarkes teach. But how the hart is purified, they haue neuer so much as vnderstoode or thought any thing thereof, or how loue is to be deriued to all states and conditions of men according to the word of God.

Thus must thou say moreouer euen in spiritual offices & states also: If I or any other shall preache to get some good benefice, whereas otherwise I would easily ceasse from doing this office,

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I may preache the Gospell, but my hart is not pure, but most plainely poluted. Therefore although I doe longe and much affirme, that it is a good worke and a weighty office, yet doe I not perfourme it a right, forasmuch as I doe it not from the hart. But then onely it is rightly done when the hart hath his affection: albeit I must get my liuing thereby, yet this ought not to be the chiefe ende thereof, but because God hath called me vnto it, and hath committed it vnto me diligently to be done, it remaineth, that I doe with all diligence labour therein to the glorie of God, and saluation of soules, which I doe otherwise also for the loue of the word, willingly and from my hart. Hereby I seeke neither loue or friendship, nor honours, nor thankefulnes of men, but my workes come from the hart, which I first doe, before I obtayne any honour, glorie, reward, money, or fauour, although if those come and followe, I may haue and receiue them without sinne

How ỹ hart of a true Preacher & minister ought to be affected.

Lo, thus the word is the cause, foundation, ground, fountaine and spring of loue comming out of the hart, & of all good workes that please God, which he can by no meanes away with, if the hart be not pure before: for neither are workes acceptable to men, which are done without the hart by dissimulation. Nowe if Cesar and men require the hart, although they can not see it, of howe muche greater estimation is that hart before God, which doth all thinges for the wordes sake? Therefore he also suffereth his word to be preached, that we may order all our life according to the prescript thereof. And let not vs suffer our selues to be hindred, frayed from it, or discouraged with the let or hindraunce of any thinge, although for it we shall suffer all kinde of losses, vnthankefulnes, contempt, &c. but let vs breake and goe through all bruntes with a bolde and manly courage, and say thus: we beganne nothinge for any mans sake, neither will we leaue of any thinge because of any man, but that we may do that which is acceptable to God, we wil go on still, howsoeuer things fal out with vs. They which doe thus, become men excellent and most highly to be esteemed, who are ready to doe all duties, and serue God with all readines of mynde and loue not feyned. For the fountaine and spring is good, not deriued and brought in frō without.

God requireth the hart

These thinges I thought good briefly to speake of the first

part howe the hart is purified by the woꝛde alone, and not as the Monkes haue dꝛeamed, by a fight taken vpon them againſt euill cogitations, & by fepning of good thoughts. Foꝛ what thoughts ſoeuer thou ſhalt feine, the hart ſhal remaine vncleane, if the woꝛd of God be not in it, although it pꝛetende a great ſhewe of a godly life, as Paule witneſſeth. But this purenes, wheꝛof he ſpeaketh, doth extend farther then outward & coꝛpoꝛal purenes doth, which the Iewes did vſe, eating & dꝛinking their hands being often waſhed, which our religious men alſo vſe in their faſting, diuerſitie of apparel, oꝛders and rites, &c. foꝛ this is called purenes of the ſpirit, which we then haue, when being inſtructed by the woꝛd of God, we know theꝛby howe he is to be ſerued in euery ſtate & calling, and endeuour to frame our liues accoꝛding thereunto.

The ſecond part.

Nowe followeth the ſeconde parte concerning a good conſcience, wheꝛeof alſo we muſt intreate, to wit, that loue muſt come from ſuch a hart, as hath a ioyful & quiet conſcience, both toward God, and alſo toward men. Toward men ſo, as Paule gloꝛieth of him ſelfe, that he liued ſo, that he offended no man, troubled no man, was an euill example and burden to no man, but all that did ſee and heare him, muſt needes witnes, that he indifferently ſerued all, helped all, counſelled all, & dealt friendly and gently with all. Such a conſcience Moſes alſo gloꝛieth of againſt ỳ ſeditious, Numb. 16. Thou knoweſt that I haue not taken ſo much as an aſſe from them, neither haue I hurt any of them. And Ieremy chap. 18. Remember, O Lorde, how that I ſtood before thee to ſpeake good for them, & to turne away thy wrath from them. Likewiſe doth Samuel 1. King. 12. I haue walked before you from my childhood vnto this day: behold here I am, beare record of me before the Lord, & before his anointed: whoſe oxe haue I taken? or whoſe aſſe haue I taken? whome haue I done wrong to? whom haue I hurt? or of whoſe hand haue I receiued any brybe? and ſo foꝛth as followeth in the ſame place. Such boaſting & gloꝛy euery Chꝛiſtian muſt attaine vnto, that he do ſo liue toward euery man, and ſo exerciſe and ſhew his loue, that no man can woꝛthely complaine any whit of him, wheꝛby he ſhal trouble oꝛ diſmay his conſcience, but that all ỳ wil confeſſe ỳ truth, may be enfoꝛced to ſay, that he hath ſo liued, ỳ he hath bin an example to euery man of liuing wel, which wil onely but follow him. And this is called a good cõſcience befoꝛe men, oꝛ againſt ỳ cõplaints

A good and quiet conſcience toward men.

and

and reprehensions of men. And albeit such a conscience is not able to stand before the iudgement of God, no nor any purenes of the hart in the outward life and worke of loue (we continuing in sinning oftentimes before God) yet we must attaine vnto such a hart, that we may comfort our selues before him also, and say: this God hath bidden & commaunded to be done, therefore I do it with a pure hart and a good conscience, neither would I willingly do otherwise, neither of purpose hurt or trouble any man, but whatsoeuer I say and doe, that is willed and commaunded of God. Let no Christian suffer such a confidence to be wrested frō him, that he may boast himselfe by the word of God against the whole world. For he that hath no regard how he leadeth his life, that he may stoppe the mouthes of all blamers and accusers, and cleare him selfe before all, and testifie that he hath liued, spoken, and done well, he I say is not yet a Christian, hauing not in him selfe a pure hart and loue. For we wil not presume of the doctrine of faith, as though that being had, euery man may doe what he list, whether it be profitable or vnprofitable to his neighbour, that we must in no case doe. Otherwise that doctrine should haue the name to giue licence and free libertie for euery one to doe what he will. But we must so behaue our selues, that we may obtaine loue out of a pure hart and a good conscience, that no man may accuse vs of any crime.

And although these thinges be spoken of our life and works, and a Christian is an other maner of man before God, as we shall heare, yet we must earnestly endeuour our selues in this also, that we may be without blame before God. And when we shall not attaine thereunto, we must flie to prayer, and say before God and man: forgiue vs our trespasses, &c. that at the least wise, our life may remayne without blame, and we may obtaine a good conscience before mē. And if this can not be brought to passe by perfect loue and purenes of the hart, yet let it be done by humilitie, that we may praye for, and desire of all men pardon of our offences, when as we haue not purely and perfectly done our dutie, or are not able to doe it, so that thy neighbour may be enforced to say, albeit thou hast greatly hurt me, or hast not done thy dutie toward me, as it was meete, yet forasmuch as thou humblest thy selfe, I will willingly forgiue thee, and take it in the best parte. And for this humilities sake

What we must doe when we faile in our dutie toward our neighboure.

I say that thou art a good man, which dooſt not ſtande obſtinately, as though thou wouldeſt aduiſedly and of purpoſe offende againſt me, but dooſt turne thy ſelfe vnto loue. Therefore that life is as yet sayde to be without blame, which albeit it was ſubiect to reprehenſion, is with humilitie couered, and reformed, that no man can worthely complaine thereof. Thus the lawe ſhould be expounded and handled, that both loue toward euery man may rightly proceede out of a pure hart for God his ſake, and the conſcience may ſtande before the world. And this ought to haue bene practiſed of thoſe vaine talkers in their Sermons, their colde trifles and vaine follies being neglected and left of. But that all theſe thinges may ſtande and be of force before God alſo, there yet remaineth one thinge which pertayneth hereunto, which is that that followeth.

And of faith vnfained.

Our olde Adam doth hinder vs that we can not attaine to perfect puritie & holines.

For as I haue ſayde, albeit I haue a good conſcience before men, and doe exercise loue out of a pure hart, yet the olde Adam, that is fleſh and blood remaine in me ſubiect to ſinnes, whereby it commeth to paſſe that I am not altogither holy and pure. And as Paule ſayth Gal. 5. The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, &c. And Rom. 7. he affirmeth that he muſt fight a dayly fight againſt him ſelf, becauſe he can not do that which is good, & yet he would willingly do it. The ſpirit in deed would very willingly liue purely & perfectly according to the worde of God, but the rebellious fleſh reſiſteth the deſire thereof, aſſailing vs with many and great tentations, that we ſhould ſeeke honour, wealth, riches, pleaſure, & ſhould become ſlouthful & negligēt in our ſtate & duty. So there remaineth a continual fight in vs, becauſe of the vnpurenes of our perſon, wherein there is not yet ſincere purenes, nor a good conſcience & perfect loue, vnleſſe there be perhaps ſomewhat before men. But before God many thinges are found lacking in vs, many things are worthy of blame, although al things be perfect before men. For examples ſake: although Dauid can obtaine that confidence before men, that he can be reprehended of no man, and the holy Prophets Eſay, Jeremie, &c. do glorie & are ſure, whatſoeuer they haue done according to their dutie, is right and well done, ſeeing it is the word and commaundement of God, wherin they haue exerciſed them ſelues with a pure hart & a good conſcience, yet can they not ſtande by this conſcience before the iudge-

Although we haue a good conſcience, and do exerciſe loue out of a pure hart before men, yet the ſame can not ſtand before God.

ment of God, but are compelled to say: If we should striue with thee in iudgement, then no man shall haue so good a conscience or so pure a hart, which doth not dread thy iudgement, and acknowledg him selfe to be worthy of reprehension and blame. For God hath reserued that prerogatiue vnto him selfe, that he may contend in iudgement with euerie one, albeit he be holy, and accuse him of deadly sinne: neyther is there any so holie, whom he may not iudge and condemne as worthy of destruction. Wherfore although both the heart be pure & the conscience good before men, yet must thou endeuoure to attaine vnto this also, that the same may be likewise good before God, that he may not find fault with them, but that they may be safe and quiet from his iudgement, as they are before men.

Hereunto now pertaineth the third parte, that is, faith. And this is the principall part and chiefe precept, containing all the rest in it, that we may knowe, that where loue is not yet perfect, the hart not sufficiently pure, and the conscience not quiet, and God doeth yet finde some thinge which is worthie blame, where the worlde can finde fault with nothinge, fayth must moreouer come, and such a fayth, which is not feyned, and defiled with confidence of a mans own holines. For wheresoeuer this is not, there the hart is neuer purified before God, neither shall the conscience be able to stande, if they be examined by seuere iudgement, and exact censure. Men in deede shall not iustly blame me, albeit I glorie, that I haue serued them by preaching, helping, gouerning, and by doing the dutie of an ouerseer or ruler, &c: with all faithfullnes. And if I haue done any thing more or lesse then I ought, I am sorie at my hart, for I would very willingly haue done all thinges that I ought. Wherefore I am quiet & already excused, neither haue they any more, which they may rightly require of me, but are enforced to acquite and discharge me. But here I must attayne vnto this also, that my hart be so pure, and my conscience so good before God, that he may not by any meanes accuse and condemne me. Howbeit we finde not this in our selues, although we may glorie somewhat thereof before the world. I must therfore obtaine some other thing whereunto I may trust, if I shall come into perill, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is commonly sayd, and I must say to my feareful and terrified conscience, I haue done that which I haue bene a

The third part.

We can not of our selues attaine to a pure hart & a good conscience before God.

ble, and who knoweth how often I haue done lesse then I ought? for I coulde not see and marke all thinges, as Dauid also sayth Psal. 19: Who can vnderstand his faultes? Therefore I can lay no foundation of trust vpon my owne holines and purenes. Wel, I haue the word, to liue, loue, and haue a good conscience, which is pure and holy. But this I want, that I can not conclude, that that is in my hart, neither doe I finde so good a conscience in me, as the lawe requireth of me. For there is no man liuing in the earth, which can say this truely, I knowe that I haue done all thinges, and that I doe owe nothinge before God. But the most holy ones must say thus: I haue done surely according to my abilitie that which I haue bene able, but I haue offended muche oftener then I knowe. Wherefore our owne conscience doth witnes against vs, accusing and conuincing vs, although before the worlde we are most free from reprehension or blame. For it must folowe the worde which sayth: this thou shouldest haue done, this thou shouldest haue left vndone. It can not auoyde the iudgement of this, nor aunswere to the accusation thereof, but it is at the least wise enforced to stande in an vncertaintie, being wholy wrapped in douting. But if it dout, then is it by and by conuinced: for it standeth not before God, but flieth and trembleth.

By what meanes we attaine to such purenes & a good cõscience as can stand before God.

Wherefore the principal part of our doctrine must here helpe vs, to wit, that our Lord Iesus Christ being sent of the father, did come into the world and hath suffered and died for vs. Whereby he hath reconciled the good will and fauour of the father to vs, his wrath being appeased, and doth nowe sitte at the right hand of the father, hauing regarde of vs as our Sauiour, and as a continuall Mediatour and Intercessour for vs, making intercession for vs, as for them which can not haue and obtayne of themselues such purenes and a good conscience. Therefore by his helpe and benefite we may saye before God: although I am not pure, neither haue a good conscience, yet I cleaue to him by faith, which hath perfect purenes and a good conscience, which he gageth for me, or rather which he giueth vnto me. For he alone is he, of whome we reade written, as Peter, and Esaie Chapter. 53. saye: who did no sinne, neither was there guile founde in his mouthe. And this prayse belongeth onely vnto him, neyther hath he any neede to praye, forgiue vs our dettes,

neithe:

neither of that article of the Creede, I beleue the forgiuenes of sinnes, &c. but he is free and quiet in perpetuall, pure and perfect righteousnes and purenes, vnto whose charge none can lay any thing, nor accuse his conscience of any crime, not man, not the deuill, no not God himselfe: for he himselfe is God, who himselfe can not accuse himselfe.

And this is called faith neither coloured nor fained, which the conscience striuing and trembling, dareth come forth in the sight of God, and say: Almightie God, I am innocent before the world and quiet in minde, so that noe man can lay any thing to my charge, or fynd fault with me. For albeit I haue not done all things, yet I aske pardō of euery one, that he will forgiue me for God his sake, euen as I againe forgiue al. By this meanes I haue cut of the complaints of all, who haue no more which they may rightly lay against me. But before thee I must lay aside this trust and confidence, and must wholy acknowledge the guiltines of innumerable synnes, and say as Dauid sayd Psal. 143. Lord enter not into iudgemēt with thy seruaunt: for in thy sight shall no man liuing be iustified. Wherefore I can not contend with thee, if thou requirest an account of my life. But I appeale from ỹ iudgemēt seat to the mercy seate, I do easily suffer, that I be dealt with according to law & right before the iudgement seat of the world, and I will willingly aunswere, and will do what I am able: Howbeit before thee I will not come into iudgement, but I desire grace, which I take holde of on euerie side. For thus the Scripture teacheth me, that God hath set two seates before men: the one a iudgement seat, for them which are yet secure and vntractable, & acknowledge not their sinnes, neither wil confesse and acknowledge them: the other a mercie seate, for miserable & fearfull consciences, which feele their sinnes, dread the iudgement of God, and do earnestly make request for grace. And this mercy seat is Christ himself, as Paul witnesseth Rom. 3. whom God hath set forth vnto vs, that we might haue refuge vnto him, being not able to stand before God by our owne power. Unto him I wil applie my selfe, if I haue done or do lesse thē is meete: and how great purenes and goodnes soeuer my heart and conscience haue before men, I will haue it here to be altogither nothing, and hidden, and couered as it were with a vaut, yea with a fayre heauen, which may mightely defend it, which is called

We must appeale from the iudgmēt seate to the mercie seate.

The iudgmēt seate.

The mercie seate.

grace and remissiō of synnes. Under the defence thereof my hart and conscience must creepe, and remayne safe and quiet. For so he commaunded his Apostles to preach & publish, that through his name all that beleeue in him, shall receiue remission of sinnes Againe, He that shall beleeue and be baptized, shalbe saued. And Ioh. 3. he sayth: God so loued the world, that he hath giuē his onely begotten Sonne, that whosoeuer beleeueth in him, should not perish, but haue euerlasting life. Therefore God hath set forth the mercy seat vnto vs, whereunto he leadeth vs from the iudgement seat. Let vs leaue other before the iudgemēt seat, namely those proud holy ones, contemners and persecuters of the word of God, where they shall heare sentence according to their deedes. We will suffer these to abyde in their circle, vntill they haue humbled themselues: but we will not abyde in this circle, but will depart from it as farre as we shalbe able, into the circle of the mercy seat, vnto which we do appeale. Neither haue we inuented this of our owne braine, but it is the word of God himselfe, which threatneth horrible iudgement to them, which come with their owne holines, and trusting thereunto, do hope that they shalbe able to stand before God the iudge, neglecting the mercy seat of Christ. For the sentence standeth, that they shalbe set before the iudgement seat, as Christ sayth Ioh. 3. He that beleeueth not is condemned alreadie, because he hath not beleeued in the name of that only begotten Sonne of God. He that beleeueth in him is not condemned, that is, shall not come to the iudgement seat, but to the mercy seat, where there is no wrath or rigoure, but grace & forgiuenes of sinnes, all thinges being remitted which be not pure, yea being blotted out and so consumed, as a droppe of water is consumed of the heat of the sunne. For where the mercy seat reigneth, there is nothing els, but mere forgiuenes and remission of synnes.

The office of the Lawe.

This therefore being knowne, we must exactly vnderstād the difference betweene the Lawe and the Gospel, whereof we often teach. The lawe draweth vs to the iudgement seat, requiring of vs integritie of life, loue out of a pure heart & a good conscience, it maketh vs also to exercise our selues therein, and must goe no further. But when it shall come and accuse thee, and will reason with thee, and haue those thinges to be performed which it requireth, then shalt thou be greatly troubled. For albeit thou hast

done

done them, yet art thou not able to stād before God, before whose iudgement seat, many thinges are yet found wanting in thee, which should haue bin done of thee, and thou hast left them vndone, neither are they knowne vnto thy selfe. Whither then wilt thou turne thee? Here the Lawe vrgeth thee by all meanes, and thine owne conscience being witnes, accuseth thee, requiring the sentence of the iudge against thee. Thē must thou despaire, there is no counsell or helpe to be had, except thou knowest to flie from the iudgemēt seat to the mercy seat, as for example: Admit some Bishop die in his owne holines, who while he liued was as it seemed of a good life, and acknowledged Christ no otherwise then a cruell iudge (as hath bene hitherto preached of him, neither hath he bin otherwise set forth, as he is also wont to be vnto such, not of his owne nature, for in deede he is most gracious and comfortable, but because they esteeme him for no other in their heart) behold this man is a hinderaunce vnto himselfe, that he can not obtaine any grace. For he knoweth no difference of the iudgement seat and the mercy seat, yea he is altogither ignorant, whether there be a mercy seat, from which he is erreth, and must be bound to the iudgement seate.

The Law will driue vs vnto desperation, vnlesse we cā appeale from the iudgmēt seate to the mercie seate.

But we teach thus, that Christ is so to be learned and considered, that we be most certainly perswaded that he sitteth before miserable and trembling consciences, that beleeue in him, not as an angrie iudge which commaundeth forthwith to carie violently them that be guiltie vnto punishment, but as a gentle, louing, and comfortable Mediatour, betweene my fearefull conscience and God, which sayth vnto me; If thou be a sinner, and astonied, and the deuill laboureth to drawe thee to the iudgement seat, then see that thou flie vnto me, and feare no wrath or anger. Wherefore? Euen because I sit here, that, if thou beleeue in me, I may make intercession for thee to my father, that no anger and seueritie may hurt thee: for all anger and punishment shalbe sooner layde vpon me, then be borne of thee. Howbeit that can not be: for he is the onely beloued sonne, in whom all grace and fauour dwelleth, whom as often as the father doth behold, he can not but replenish both heauen and earth with grace and fauour, and forget all wrath and displeasure. And what soeuer he shall aske of his father, that he shall forthwith obtaine without all repulse or deniall. So by faith we are made wholy blessed and

How Christ must be learned and considered of.

saſe, subiect no moze to any damnation, yet not foz our owne holines and purenes, but foz Chzistes sake, to whom we cleaue by faith as to our mercy seate, being assuredly perswaded, that with him there remaineth no anger, but mere loue, and pardon and forgiuenes of synnes. Thus the heart is purified before God, and the conscience made good and quiet, not in respect had of mine owne purenes oz life led before the wozld, but by trust and confidence of that excellent treasure, which my heart apprehendeth, which is vnto me in steede of a pledge and sulnes, when as before God I am not able to paye.

We must especially take heede, that our faith be not false or feyned.

But herein the whole force of the matter consisteth, that we do againe and againe take heede, that our faith be not false, oz as Paul speaketh, fained. Foz if this erre, and deceiue vs, all things deceiue vs. Foz there haue bin many in all ages, as there be also at this day, which can speake many thinges of faith, and wilbe maisters not onely of the law, but euen of the Gospell also. Who say the same that we do, that faith performeth & doth all thinges, but that the law and good wozkes are also to be ioyned vnto it, and that otherwise, if these be not added, faith auaileth nothing. In which wozdes they mixe & mingle togither our life & wozks, and Chzist. But this is not purely and syncerely to haue taught faith, but to haue coloured, defiled and corrupted faith, so that it can no moze be called faith, but a feined colour & counterfeiting of faith, the trust and confidence of the heart standing not purely toward Chzist, as the onely mercy seate, but being grounded vpon our own holines, as being able to stand before the iudgemẽt seat. Wherefoze doing thus, we are most rightly cast of before God, and condemned vnto destruction whereof we are most wozthie. Foz if faith must be pure and voyd of all counterfeiting and fayning, then these two thinges, Chzist and my wozkes must be rightly discerned and seuered one from the other. Foz this is plaine euen to him that is blinde, that Chzist and his wozkes are not my life and my wozkes, but are separated from the Law and from the wozkes of all men, yea and that by a greater distaunce, then man is vnlike oz differeth from man. Foz neither can I say that I and Cesar oz the Bishop of Rome are the same thing, yet I am much neerer and liker vnto either of them, then a moztall man and a sinner is vnto Chzist the Lozd, who is not onely a pure and holy man, free from all spot and blot, but is mozeouer

God

God also. Therefore let the Lawe and the pureness of thy hart, yea and thy good conscience auaile in earth onely toward men: But where the mercy seat is, to wit at the right hand of the father, and the Mediatour betweene thee & God, thither no mans workes & merits ought to haue accesse, much lesse be they there of any force or value. Wherefore Christ is purely to be separated from all my life, deedes and workes, and we must without exception conclude, that he is an other thing then our life led before men with a pure heart and a good conscience, albeit it be led euen perfectly and without blame. For it being presented before God, and by the lawe brought to the iudgement seat, I am condemned and lost. But Christ is the mercy seat, and all that cleaue vnto him by faith, can not be condemned and iudged. So the iudgement seat togither with the lawe and all my life goe into one part: but my faith must flie and leap farre vnto an other part, and ioyne it selfe vnto him which is pure, and hath no synne, of whom the Scripture speaketh: he that beleeueth in him shal not be confounded. Because he is present in the sight of the father, and maketh intercession for me. Moreouer he giueth me his own pureness and holines, that being clothed and adorned therewith, I may be able to stand before God, and all wrath and displeasure may be taken away, in steede whereof I may enioy meere loue and fauour.

Loe, thus faith remaineth pure and free from counterfeiting, for it resteth not vpon my workes, that because of them it should behoue God to be gentle and fauourable vnto me, as a false and fained faith doth, which mingleth togither mans merits and the grace of God, and although it hold the words of Christ, yet hath it the confidence and trust of the heart reposed in it selfe, so, that it is certaine, that it is onely a colour which can not long continue. For the matter commeth at the last to this point, that beleeuing that God is fauourable vnto thee because of thy life led without fault or blame, thou must despaire and say: who knoweth what I haue done? whereby am I certaine that I haue neglected nothing through carelesnes, or that nothing is wanting in me? In this doutfulnes of minde the foundation faileth, sliding away vnder thee like vnto sand moued or stirred, and so faith is of no force or value at all. Wherefore it is not vnfitly called fained and painted faith, through which one seeth as it were through a

A fained faith is no sure foundation, but faileth thē that trust vnto it.

lattis or painted glasse, through which the thinge that is seene representeth the colour of the glasse, and yet is not in deede of that colour. So they also beleeue that that affection is in God, that he vouchsaueth to regard our workes and merits. Which they paint forth according to their owne opinion and dreames, which are vtterly false, rash and vnaduised. And so iudging God & all things according to them, they see onely as it were through a lattis or painted glasse. But so onely thou shalt behold him with pure and cleere eyes, if thou do well separate the iudgement seat and the mercy seat one from the other, that heauen with the starres thereof may remaine pure to grace & remission of synnes obtained by the Mediatour, where Christ reigneth with his workes, and the earth also with her trees and herbes, whither we must be referred with our workes. The matter I say must be brought of vs to that passe, if we will stand with a right and an vnfained faith before God, that we do purely distinguish and seuer our selues, our life, and Christ or the mercy seat: and he that will not doe this, but presenteth himselfe before the iudgement seat with a bold courage, shall feele the reward of his rashnes. I my selfe haue bin in that daunger, and as it were a mouse hauing tasted pitch haue runne a way, reioysing greatly that libertie was giuen me to attaine to the mercy seat, and now I am enforced to say, that albeit I haue liued very well before men, yet al things committed of me contrariwise, do remaine beneath vnder the iudgement seat, to be punished according to the sentence and iudgement of God. Now I haue no other comfort, nor no other helpe and counsell of my saluation, then that Christ is my mercy seate, who hath neuer offended, hath defiled himselfe with no sinne, who died and rose againe for me, and sitteth now at the right hand of the father, & defendeth me vnder his shadow and protection that I neede not doute, that I am by his benefite and intercession safe before God from all wrath and terrour of iudgement. Thus faith remaineth in all thinges pure, setting no other thinge before it selfe, whereunto it may boldly trust, but Christ alone.

Only Christ is our cõfort and meanes whereby we attaine salua tion.

Now he that knew this well, shoulde be a man of a resolute mynde. For all other haue to do with a feined faith, boasting many thinges of faith, but mingling all thinges together, like as hintners mixe wine with water, by this that they say, if thou liue

thus

thus, God wilbe fauourable vnto thee, and they make the iudgement seat of the mercy seat, and the mercy seat of the iudgement seat, which by no meanes can be, for the iudgement seate shall remaine, &c. Wherefore separate these two one from the other as farre as thou shalt be able, that they come not togither, namely, thy life and holines togither with the iudgement seat into one place, which may driue & enforce thee to haue a good conscience, and to leade an vpright life before men. But offer thy synnes to the mercy seate to be transferred into an other place, where God louingly receiuing thee, will embrace thee as a beloued sonne, and will neuer remember more any wrath or synnes. If such doctrine of faith were set forth vnto men, then should it be excellently well done, and all other thinges should follow of their owne accord, as purenes of heart and goodnes of conscience, through right and perfect loue. For whosoeuer is by faith quiet in his heart, and assured that he hath God fauourable vnto him, who is not angry with him, albeit he hath deserued his wrath diuerse wayes, he doth all thinges with a glad and cherefull minde. Moreouer he liueth so also toward men, that he is louing and beneficiall toward all, although they be not worthie of loue. He is quiet toward God through Christ the Mediatour, who will not throw him downe headlong into hell, but doth louingly fauour him, and lifteth him vp into heauen. And this is the chiefe quietnes, and principall point and foundation of our saluation. Afterwardes he doth in his life shew himselfe dutyfull also toward his neighbour, doing all the best thinges he is able vnto him, whatsoeuer his state or dutie commaundeth or requireth. And when he doth lesse then is meete, he asketh pardon of his negligence before God and men, so that there is left occasion neither to him, nor the world afterward to rebuke him, power also to deuour him is taken from hell, and to teare him in peeces, from the deuill. Thus a man is saide to be in all thinges perfect, toward men by loue, and toward God not by the lawe, but by Christ, whom he apprehendeth by his faith, as the mercy seat: Which gageth his holines for the beleeuers, or rather giueth it to them, so, that in him they haue all thinges that are necessary to saluation. How we become perfect.

Now this is right and pure doctrine, which should be exercised and taught vnto men distinctly, that they might know how

they may be able to stand both before God and men, that fayth and loue be not mingled togither, or life referred both to God and men. This ought to haue bin performed of those glorious and arrogant teachers, seeing that they wil be counted maisters of the law, that the difference of the law and faith might be well knowne vnto all. For although it be taught and repeted with neuer so great diligence, yet notwithstanding it is very hard to be wel and throughly learned, especially to vs which haue bin instructed and trained vp in the doctrine of workes, and led onely to the lawe and our owne workes. To these may be added our nature also verie prone and ready vp it selfe thereunto, and nowe brought into a custome, whereby it is confirmed, and in continuance of time turneth the heart also into exercise and vse, so, that we can not abstaine, nor thinke otherwise, but, that God wilbe fauourable vnto vs, which haue done so great workes, and haue led our life so without blame or fault. Therefore we must strine against both our nature and custome. For surely it is a very hard thing to thinke or be perswaded otherwise, and so purely to put a difference betweene faith and loue, the filth still hanging vpon vs and cleauing vnto vs, albeit we be now in faith, so that our heart can scarce rule it selfe, that it say not: so long time haue I taught the Gospell, so haue I liued, such great workes haue I done, &c. And we would very willingly haue God to regard our life, and turne his mercy seat for our cause into a iudgement seat. Thou mayest vse this boasting toward men, I haue done well to all as I haue bin able, and if any thing be wanting, I as yet wil endeuour to make a recompense. But if thou be minded to go vnto God, I aduise thee to cease from such arrogant boasting, and thinke to appeale from iudgement to grace.

Very hard to learne the true doctrine of faith.

Let who will begin and proue this thing, he shall at length see and trie, how grieuous and hard it is, for a man that hath bin occupied all his life time in the workes of his owne holines, to escape out, and with all his heart by faith to cleaue to this one Mediatour. I my selfe haue now preached the Gospell almost twentie yeares, and haue bin exercised in the same daily by reading & writing, so that I may wel seeme to be rid of this wicked opinion. Notwithstanding I yet now and then feele the same old filth to cleaue in my hart, whereby it commeth to passe that I would willingly so haue to do with God, that I might bring some

A hard thing to trust nothing to our owne workes and holines.

some thing with my selfe, because of which he should for my holines sake giue me his grace. And I can scarce be brought to commit my selfe with all confidence to meere grace, which I should doe: for we ought to flie onely to the mercy seate, forasmuch as God hath set it before vs for a sanctuarie, which must be the refuge of all them that shalbe saued. Wherefore it is not to be meruelled at, if it be grieuous vnto others, so purely to apprehende and laie holde of fayth: but especially to such as be yet hindered and entangled of deuellish preachers, of whom Paule speaketh, which crie out against the doctrine of faith, and in these wordes vrge the workes of the Lawe, Do this and thou shalt liue: Also, If thou wilt enter into lyfe, keepe the commaundementes. &c. Which in deede are true and right, if thou didst also rightlie vnderstande them. Declare vnto me the true meaning of these wordes, otherwise I know sufficiently already, that I ought to be righteous and keepe the commaundementes. But how must I attaine hereunto? or what is it to be righteous? If thou sayest that it is, to haue a good conscience and a pure heart, and to doe all thinges, that God hath commaunded: Well, be it so, but heare ye then? goe to, performe me that, or at least shew one, that dareth say that he hath performed it. For thou shalt not yet so purifie my heart and conscience with thy doctrine, that God can not accuse and condemne me. But now the Lawe (as it hath bin sufficiently declared) requireth such a heart, as hath a good conscience before God. How therefore do we obtaine such a conscience? This is the question and the cause, whereof the controuersie is. Truly it commeth not hereof, because thou teachest the iudgement seate, that is, the Lawe, but from hence, for that we haue a pure and vnfayned fayth, which layeth hold of Christ, in whom it most fully obtayneth all thinges, which the Lawe requireth. So at length all thinges are brought to passe in me hauing a good conscience, inasmuch as I am nowe made righteous and iustified before God. For although that many thinges be as yet found wanting in me, yet he standeth on my side, who hath so much righteousnesse, as wherewith he is able to supplie both mine and all mens defectes.

How we obtaine a good conscience.

Thus we shew the way whereby we are made righteous before God, when as they, when they teach best of all, shew onelie the waye to attayne to honestie and righteousnesse which is of

Teachers & vrgers of the Lawe.

force and value before men, contending that it ought to be of force before God also, mingling together all thinges in one, inasmuch as they haue noe certaine knowledge thereof, vnderstanding not what they say or what they affirme. For, to what ende tendeth this thy immoderate cry? He that will enter into life, let him keepe the commaundements, &c. in which wordes thou shalt not shew the way to attaine righteousnes: for descend a litle into thy selfe, and examine thy selfe diligently, then shalt thou fynde thy selfe to haue bin in time past conceiued and borne in synnes, and to liue in the same nowe, and not to be able to performe that which the lawe requireth. Why therefore doest thou seduce other with vaine wordes, saying? be thou righteous and thou shalt be saued, which is to no purpose, neither foloweth there any frute thereof, the waye being not shewed by which we attaine to iustification? I heare the wordes well, what things the lawe requireth, but how shall we attaine vnto abilitie to fulfill them? Then speakest thou to me againe and sayest, thou must doe good workes. But how shall I stand before the iudgement of God, if I haue long and much wrought good workes, and am righteous before men, as thou teachest me? howe shall I be certaine, that I seeme such a one to God also? For here my hearte and conscience be ready to witnes the contrary against me.

True doctrin concerning Christian righteousnes

Howbeit I should haue bin thus taught of thee, as Paul commonly teacheth, that righteousnes must proceede from faith vnfayned, and before all thinges the mercy seat must be layd hold of, from whence all thinges that are wanting in vs are to be taken. And so in deede these wordes, keepe the commaundementes of God, are rightly to be vnderstood. For the lawe requireth perfect righteousnes in thee, being of force as well before God as before men: thou hauing obtained this, goe forth into the companie and assembly of men, and exercise loue, and doe good workes. By this order and meanes, something is brought to passe, and such sayinges of the Scripture are fulfilled. For so man doth that which the lawe requireth, first before God, not by his owne strength or vertues, but by Christ, without whom we can doe nothing before God, and secondly by his owne endeuour before men. And he is now perfectly righteous, inwardly by faith in Christ, and outwardly also by his workes, yet so,

How a Christian is perfectly righteous.

that

that there is no place amõg mẽ for mutual pardoning of offences. Therefore the righteousnes of Christians doth much more consist in forgiuing, then in their owne workes. Those vaine praters doe peruert the order of this doctrine, and without preaching of forgiuenes, doe teache that workes onely are to be vrged.

Loe, thus Saint Paule reprehendeth the errour and ignoraunce of them, which speake much of the lawe, and repete it in daily sermons, and yet they them selues doe not vnderstand or shew the waye, howe the lawe must be fulfilled, knowing nothing so well as to babble forth and often to repete these wordes, that the lawe, the commaundementes are to be kept, if thou wilt be saued, good workes must be done, &c. As they do at this daye, fill all bookes with such confusion of wordes, and in all their sermons vtter nothing els, then such vaine babling, which they themselues vnderstand not. But they neuer saye worde of those thinges whereof Paul here speaketh, namely of the summe of Christian doctrine, how loue must flowe out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith vnfayned, they say no more, but keepe the commaundements. They leuelling at the true marke do neuer hit it: therefore they corrupt and falsifie all thinges, loue, the heart, the conscience &c. For the head of the fountaine is wanting, that is, syncere faith, which if it be not right and sound, all thinges must needes be corrupt, which shall flow and proceede from it. And what soeuer they teach, it is a conceipt of their owne imagination, and like to delusions, not vnlike also to those thinges, that are seene through a lattis or glasse, which resemble the colour of the cleare glasse, and yet in deede are not of that coulour. They thinke that God will regard them, when they liue so before men, as it seemeth good to their obscure opinion. But if God were of that opinion, he might then haue well kept still Christ and the Gospell. For what neede or necessitie should moue him, to send Christ from heauen, who should purchase that vnto vs with his precious bloud, which we our selues haue before with vs? He surely should be the foolishest of all men, which would poure forth a precious treasure, which no man needeth. Vaine teachers.

Thus thou seest how these men teach their owne dreames, whereof they themselues know or haue tried no certainty, nei-

ther doe any thing els but fill men with errours, being not able to declare, how that which they teach is to be attained vnto. They draw men vnto workes, whereby they confirme them in their olde nature and custome, out of which they were to be drawen. These truly are grieuous and odious men, and not vnworthely verie sharpely accused and reprehended of Paul: and it appeareth that they were of no small authoritie and estimation, seeing that he pronounceth of them, that they were called and would be counted doctours of the Lawe, and farre greater and worthier then the Apostles themselues.

Wherefore we must endeuour to lay vp and print this text euen in the bottom of our heart: for it is excellently well ordered, and is pure and perfect doctrine, teaching how we must be righteous before God and men, as the Lawe requireth, that these three maye be as it were conioined in vs, namely, a pure heart, a good conscience, and fayth vnfayned: and that our life may flow out of all these, and be occupied and led in them: then haue we attained, and fulfilled the meaning of the Lawe. Howbeit we must most diligently take heede, and endeuour to draw Christ vnto the lawe, who is the ende and fulfilling of the Lawe, and our righteousnes and fulnes before God, which we fynde not in our selues, and without fayth shall neuer finde, albeit the Lawe be taught and often repeted without vnderstanding and knowledge. And these thinges maye suffize to haue bin spoken at this present for the exposition of this place.

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A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, OF THE QVESTION OF THE PHARISEES, AND aunſwere of Chriſt concerning giuing tribute to Cæſar.

Matth. 22.

Verſe. 15. THen went the Phariſeis, and tooke counſell howe they might tangle him in talke.

16 And they ſent vnto him their diſciples with the Herodians, ſaying: Maiſter, we know that thou art true, & teacheſt the way of God truly, neither careſt for any mā: for thou conſidereſt not the perſon of men.

17 Tell vs therefore, how thinkeſt thou? Is it lawfull to giue tribute vnto Cæſar or not?

18 But Ieſus perceiued their wickednes and ſayd: Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19 Shew me the tribute mony. And they brought him a penie.

20 And he ſayde vnto them: Whoſe is this image and ſuperſcription?

21 They ſaid vnto him, Cæſars, Then ſaid he vnto them: Giue therefore to Cæſar the thinges which are Cæſars, and giue vnto God, thoſe thinges which are Gods.

22 And when they heard it they meruailed, and left him, and went their waye.

Mans wisedome & reason is not able to prevaile against the wisedom of God.

IN this text is set forth vnto vs, how subtil reason and mans wisedome agree with the wisedome of God, and how fouly reason stumbleth, when it striueth to be euen most subtil and wise, as it here falleth out with the Pharisees, who notwithstanding were the best and most wise of the Iewes, which euen by this their subtiltie they declare: neuertheles their wisdome is here proued to be folishnes. They could blame Christ neither for his preaching nor for his workes, and yet would they willingly haue had occasion to put him to death, wherefore they thought to set vpon him most craftely and wilely, propounding a subtil question vnto him, the subtiltie whereof was such, that mans reason was not able to comprehende it, then which also a subtiller could not be inuented: and thus they speake vnto him:

The subtill question of the Phariseis propounded vnto Christ.

Maister, we know that thou art true, and teachest the waye of God truly, neither carest for any man: for thou considerest not the person of men. Tell vs therefore, how thinkest thou? Is it lawful to giue tribute vnto Cæsar or not? Here thinke they, we shal entrappe him. For he shalbe compelled to aunswere that tribute is either to be giuen or not to be giuen. If he affirme that it is to be giuen, we haue ouercome him: but if he denie that it is to be giuen, then is he guiltie of death. Whereas they say, Maister, they will thereby moue him, and as it were constraine him to aunswere the truth. But whereas they say, We know that thou art true, they do thereby put him in minde of his duty. Whither therefore should Christ turne himselfe? for there seemeth to be no way for him to escape, yet he would not for all that fall into their net. Was not this a subtil questiō? Do they not shew themselues to haue bin sufficient craftie and wily ones? for which way soeuer the Lord had aunswered, he had bin taken. Was not this done also ful warely and circumspectly? for they associate to themselues the ministers of Herode, thinking no other but to entrappe him with deceit, that he should not by any meanes escape, thus casting in their mindes: Now we will mete with him well enough, if he denie that tribute is to be giuen, the Herodians are present, which shall forthwith put him to death as a seditious felow, and one that resisteth the Romane Empire. But if he affirme that tribute is to be giuen, he speaketh against the libertie of the Iewes, then will we stirre vp the people against him. For

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the Iewish people would be free, and haue their king of their owne stocke, euen as it was promised them both of Moses and God, that their kingdome should continue vntill the time of the true king, that is, of Christ. Euen as the Patriarch did prophecie thereof: The scepter shal not depart from Iuda and a lawgiuer from betweene his feete, vntil Silo come. And therefore God did choose this people specially to himselfe, and made a kingdom of them, onely for Christes cause. Moreouer there were many sentences in the Scripture which declared that they should serue none, For they should be the chiefest and not the lowest, &c. This and such like sayings the Scribes had beaten into the peoples heades, wherewith they were greately disturbed: euen as at this day it is put into the peoples minde, that the Church cannot erre. Hereupon the Pharisees thought thus: If he affirme that tribute must be giuen, he blasphemeth God, he shalbe guiltie of death, as one iniurious to God, and then shalbe stoned of the people. For God hath graunted and promised libertie vnto this people, and they were all euen in the middest of captiuitie the people of God. Howbeit at that time they wanted a king, as they do at this day. Wherefore diuers tumults, seditions, & vprores were stirred vp among them. For they were taught by the lawe, that they should haue a king of their own flesh and stocke, as it is said before, wherefore they did vncessantly striue against straunge kings and gouernments, vntill not a few of them at times were beaten & slaine. Neither did this happen seldom times, for they were a stiffenecked, obstinate, and vnruly nation, & therefore the Romaines which at that time did beare rule ouer them, did verie circumspectly gouerne them, and diuided the land into foure charges of gouernment, that being on euerie side kept in awe by the gouernours and presidents, they might not so soone flocke togither and moue sedition, and that they might also be more easily resisted if at any time they should rise against the Romane Empire. Wherefore Pilate was appointed of the Romans lieftenant of Iudea, Herode Tetrarch of Galile, his brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea, and of the countrie of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene, as Luke rehearseth them. And all this was done that they might keepe the Iewes vnder, whereupon the Iewes were inflamed with anger, and in a rage and furie, but especially in the time of Christ

Gen. 49.10.

Deut. 28.13.

they would willingly haue a king.

Wherefore the Phariſes hauing found out this deuiſe, thought thus with them ſelues. Well, we haue the matter now at a good ſtay. The Romanes chalenge to themſelues the gouernmēt, now if he anſwere vnto the queſtion that tribute is not to be giuen, the lieftenant is at hand and ready to put him to death: if he anſwere that it muſt be giuen, he ſhall ſtirre vp the people againſt himſelfe, and ſo we ſhall aſſuredly by this meanes entrappe him: thus they ſuppoſed that either they ſhould fynde cauſe of death in the Lord, or at the leaſt make his doctrine to be nothing ſet by of the people. As the Iewes here do, ſo alſo do we, the chiefe and neceſſarie thinges being left, we are occupied about other matters not neceſſarie. The Phariſees here moue a queſtion, whether they be free or otherwiſe: foraſmuch as they had the Lawe and the word of God, they ſuppoſed that they ought to be ſubiect to none, but to their owne Kinge, yet they were now compelled to obey Ceſar Emperour of Rome. They had Scripture concerning the loue of God and their neighbour, but that being left, they are occupied about other matters. It was promiſed vnto them, if they obeyed the precepts and commaundements of God, that they then ſhould be a free people: they diſobey and neglect Gods commaundements, and yet notwithſtanding they will be free, and haue their owne king. In like maner falleth it out with vs, we earneſtly chaleng to our ſelues Chriſtian liberty, and yet we thinke, that if we doe thoſe thinges that ſeeme good in our owne braine and fantaſie, we are thereby Chriſtians, both faith and charitie being of vs neglected. But what doth Chriſt, the Phariſees ſo ſubtilly ſetting vpon him? he ſtriketh them with their owne ſword, and entrappeth them in their owne deuiſe, whereby they thought to haue entrapped him, anſwering neither of thoſe thinges which they hoped he would, as the Euangeliſt doth more at large deſcribe, ſaying:

The ſubtill imaginations of the Phariſees againſt Chriſt.

But Ieſus perceiued their wickednes & ſaid: Why tēpt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute mony. And they brought him a peny. And he ſaid vnto thē: Whoſe is this image & ſuperſcriptiō? they ſaid vnto him, Cæſars. Here thou plainely ſeeſt the wiſdom & merueilous dexteritie of Chriſt, he willeth the tribute money to be ſhewed vnto him, and aſketh of the image and ſuperſcription therof. They anſwering that it is Ceſars, he very wel and

The wiſdome of Chriſt in confounding the craft and ſubtiltie of the Phariſies

and moſt freely inferreth, that they are vnder Ceſar, vnto whom they were compelled to pay tribute. As if he ſayd: If ye haue ſo let in Ceſar, that his money is coyned with you, ſurely he beareth rule ouer you, as though he ſhould ſay: It is come to paſſe through your owne fault that Ceſar ruleth ouer you. What ſhould they ſay or doe vnto this queſtion? They meruailed and went their wayes, they thought that they ſhould notably haue ouercome him, but for all their ſubtiltie and wiſdome they were deceiued.

This is written for our comfort, that we which are Chriſtians may know that we haue ſuch wiſedom, as exceedeth all wiſedom, ſuch ſtrength and righteouſnes, as whereunto no ſtrength & righteouſnes of man is like. For againſt the holy Ghoſt there is no counſell: this power and ſtrength we obtaine through Chriſt, that we may tread ſinne vnder foote, and triumph ouer death. When Chriſt dwelleth in vs by faith, we haue him which bringeth to paſſe ſuch thinges, howbeit they are not throughly felt but in time of tentation. Wherfore when I ſtand in neede, he is preſent, and giueth vnto me ſtrength, that I may courageouſly paſſe through. We muſt not therefore be afraide that our doctrine ſhall periſh and be put to ignominie and ſhame. For let all the wiſe men of the world riſe againſt the worde of God, yea and be neuer ſo circumſpect, and ſet themſelues againſt it, yet ſhall they haue the foyle and be ouercome. It may be that they barke and bite, ſo that it ſeemeth vnto men, as though they would deſtroy the Goſpell; but when they haue ſet themſelues againſt it to extinguiſh it, they ſhall no whit preuaile, but in the ſnare that they haue layd for others, they themſelues ſhall at length be taken. As we ſee here in this text, and commonly in Paule, but ſpecially in the hiſtorie of S. Steuen, where we read how vainely his aduerſaries vſed ỳ Scriptures, yea thoſe that they vſed were againſt themſelues. For the Iewes did accuſe Steuen, that he had ſpoken both againſt the temple, and againſt God which commaunded the temple to be builded, bringing & alleaging Scriptures, whereby they thought to conuince and condemne him. But Steuen being full of the holy Ghoſt, ſhewed them in order out of the Scripture, how that God dwelleth not in tẽples made with handes: Dauid would haue built him a houſe, but God refuſed it. What was the cauſe hereof? A long time before Dauid was

The wiſdome & ſtrength of Chriſtians.

borne, God, dwelt among his people. He surely should be a miserable God which should neede a house. And so he confirmeth by many histories that God doth not dwell in houses or temples made with handes. What should the Iewes do here? they did manifestly acknowledge their owne Scripture, which they had brought against Stenen. So all they shall be put to shame and ouerthrowne, which set themselues against the wisedome & word of God.

The wisdom & power of the worlde shal neuer be able to extinguish or suppresse the Gospell.

Wherefore let no man be afraide, albeit all the wisedom and power of the world striue against the Gospell, although it would extinguish it euē by sheeding of blood. For the more blood that is shed, so much more is the number of Christians increased. The blood of Christians sayth Tertullian, is seed whereof Christians growe. Satan must be drowned in the blood of Christians. Wherefore it is not violence and force that is able to suppresse the Gospell: for it is like vnto a palme tree, which hath this nature and qualitie, that albeit a weight be layd vpon it, yet it alwayes riseth and lifteth vp it selfe against the weight. Such a nature also hath the Gospell, for the more it is striuen against, so much more are the rootes thereof spred abroade, and the more mightely that it is oppressed, by so much doth it more and more grow and increase. Wherefore there is no cause that we should be afraid of power, but rather that we should feare prosperitie & merie dayes, which are able to hurt vs more then anguishe & persecution. Neither let vs be afraid of the subtiltie and wisedom of the world, for they can not hurt vs, yea the more that they striue against the truth, so much more pure & cleare is the truth made. Nothing therefore can come better to the Gospel, then when the world with his force and wisedom setteth it selfe against it. The more vehemently sinne and Satan doe fight against my conscience, so much stronger is my righteousnes made. For if sinnes do vrge and disquiet me, I doe then more ardently pray and cry vnto God, and so my faith is more and more increased and strengthned. This is that which S. Paul meaneth when he sayth: Power is made perfect through weakenes. For asmuch therefore as we haue so great a treasure, which is increased and strengthned by persecutions and aduersitie, there is no cause that we should be afraid, but rather that we should with a cherefull mind reioyce in tribulation, as S. Paule sayth Rom. 5. according as the Apo-

Not persecution & trouble, but too much prosperity is to be feared of Christians.

2. Cor. 12. 9

stles

ſtles did, who with great ioy departing from the councells, gaue God thankes, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer rebuke for the name of Ieſus. *Acts.5.41.*

If the deuill were endued with ſuch wiſedom, that he would be quiet, and ſuffer the Goſpell to haue free courſe, he ſhould not ſuffer ſo much loſſe. For when the Goſpell is not impugned, it is as it were waſted with ruſt, neither hath it occaſion to ſhew forth the vertue and power thereof. We liue therefore here ſecure as yet, for no man ſtriueth againſt vs, wherefore we continue ſtill as we were before, yea (alas) we become worſe and worſe. Whereas ſome of our aduerſaries haue ſet vpon vs by writing, that pertaineth to a few. Forasmuch as they haue written againſt vs, they haue thereby done nothing els, but as it were blowen the fire, but if we had bene throwne into the fire, or ſlayne with the ſworde, the number of Chriſtians would be greater amonge vs. Wherefore this is a comfort vnto vs, if we at any time be tempted that Chriſt is ready to helpe vs, & reigneth among vs, yea he is ſo neare vnto vs, that alwayes through him we may ouercome, as long as we beleeue and truſt in him: Howbeit when we are touched with no aduerſitie, he doth litle or nothing, but when we are fought againſt and oppreſſed, he is preſent, and bringeth all our enemies to confuſion. The comfort of Chriſtians in tentation.

We haue moreouer to learne here that they which are wiſe & mightier then other, which are endued with the chiefe giftes of vnderſtanding and nature more then other, which excell in greater induſtrie, learning and readier capacitie then other, which are fit to ouerſee other, and can gouerne all thinges beſt, that they I ſay doe many times moſt of all other reſiſt God and faith, & truſt more to their owne ſtrength and reaſon then to God. For they are caried ſo farre by their venimous nature, that they neither can nor wil vſe thoſe things to the commoditie and profit of their neighbour: but truſting to their owne giftes and abilitie, they hope that now they ſhall obtaine this, now that, neither doe they thinke that they ſhall haue neede of Gods helpe alſo thereunto: As it appeareth here in the Phariſees and Scribes, who were certaine, as they ſuppoſed, that if they ſo ſet vpon the Lorde, it could not be, but that they ſhould then entangle him. For it is vnpoſſible, thought they, that he ſhould here eſcape vs, we ſhal here hold him as it were faine into a net, whether he affirme or denie The moſt wiſe & mighty of the world doe oftentimes ſtriue moſt againſt God.

that tribute must be giuen. Marke moreouer how subtle and peruerse ꝑ wit of mans nature is, which is here very liuely set forth. There is nothing els in man but wickednes, delusion, guile, deceits, lying, fraude, and all kind of euill, yea of nature man is but lyes and vanitie as the 116. Psalme sayth. We must not trust any man in any thinge, doe not perswade thy selfe, that any man speaketh the truth vnto thee, for whatsoeuer man speaketh it is a lye. Why so? The fountaine or springe head, that is, the hart is not sincere, wherefore neither can the riuers be pure. And for this cause the Lord doth commonly cal men the generation of vipers and a brood of serpents. Is not this a goodly title of man?

The nature of man vntill he be regenerate by the spirit of God is wholy corrupt and vnpure.

Let any man nowe goe, and glorie of his owne righteousnes, strength or free will. Before the world in deede some man may be, and gloriously appeare godly, righteous, and holy, but there is nothing els, but a generation of vipers and brood of serpents, and that especially in those that seeme most excellent, most pretious, most wise, & of greatest vnderstanding. If thou go through euen all the histories of the Greekes, Iewes, & Romanes, thou shalt find the best and wisest Princes of all, which haue gouerned the affayres of their Empire prosperously, thou shalt finde them I say to haue thought nothing of God, but only trusting to themselues, to haue acknowledged nothinge as receiued from God. Hereupon it is gathered, that the lesse a man excelleth in wisedom before the world, so much lesse doth he commit against God. For they that excell in counsell and authoritie before the sight of the world, do for the most part deceiue and lye more then others, thinking that if they deale by delusions and deceit, their fraude & iniquitie is not perceiued: for they can after a pretie sorte cloke their craft and subtiltie. But the holy Ghost hath a most cleare & bright sight, which they can not auoyde, but they shall be espied. The Scripture doth often times cal such, lyons, wolues, beares, swine, and cruel beastes, inasmuch as they rage, and deuoure and consume all thinges with their fraude and deceit. Wherefore in the old testament the Iewes were forbidden to eate of certaine beastes, as of those already rehearsed, and of others, for this one cause especially, that it should be a type and example to vs, whereby we might perceiue, that there are some mē, which are strong, mighty, rich, witty, learned, skilfull, and wise, which are to be auoyded and eschewed as a certaine vncleane thing, and as such as

seduce

ſeduce and deceiue others with their fayre ſhew, might, and wiſedom. For neither ſhall they be counted for ſuch, neither will any man thinke them to be ſuch, as doe ſo much as thinke any euill in their hart much leſſe doe it. Wherefore thou muſt put no truſt & confidence in any man, truſt not vnto him, for he will deceiue thee wherein ſoeuer he is able. Againe if thou truſteſt man, thou art againſt God, in whom thou putteſt not thy truſt. It is written in the 17. chapter of Ieremie: Curſed be the man that putteth his truſt in man, and, Bleſſed is the man that putteth his truſt in the Lord.

Some man may now ſay: How ſhall we doe then? One man muſt haue dealing with an other, otherwiſe howe can the life of man continue? We muſt buy, we muſt ſell, we muſt vtter and chaunge our wares with men: Now if one ſhould not truſt an other, the whole trade of mans affaires ſhould be in perill, yea and periſh. I ſay that no man can deny, but that there muſt be mutual dealings among men, and that one doth neede the helpe and trauell of an other. But this I will haue, that whatſoeuer dealing thou haſt with men, either in buying or ſelling, thou count it for a thinge vncertaine, whith thou muſt neither truſt, nor build vpon For it is certaine, as ſoone as thou ſhalt truſt to man, he will ſeeke to deceiue thee, forasmuch as the nature of man, as it is of it ſelfe, can doe nothing but lye and deceiue. Yea all thinges in man are vncertaine, both his workes and words, there is nothing in him, but lightnes and vnconſtancie, which thou mayſt boldly beleeue to be true. Wherefore all our hope and confidence muſt be repoſed in God alone, and after this ſort we muſt ſay: Lorde, giue thou me grace that I may direct & order my life, my ſoule, my body, my ſubſtance and goods, and whatſoeuer is mine, according to thy diuine will, for I beleeue in thee, I truſt in thee, doe not thou forſake me in ſo perilous dealing with this or that man: I put no truſt in man. If thou knoweſt that it is good for me, make him to deale faithfully with me, if thou knoweſt that it will be to my hinderance and hurt, helpe me to auoid it, for thy will onely pleaſeth me, which I wiſh alwayes to be done.

An obiection

The aunſwer

We muſt put all our hope and truſt in God onely.

As ſoone as thou thinkeſt in thy mind: He is a good man, and one that wil keepe his promiſe, I am ſure that he wil not deceiue me, but wil deale faithfully, euen then haſt thou fallen from God, and worſhipped an idoll, putting thy truſt in a lyar. Wherefore

when thou haſt any dealing with man, thinke boldly: If he deale faithfully it is well, if he do otherwiſe, in the name of God, let him goe, I will commit all thinges to the will of God, he ſhall proſperouſly bring them to paſſe. Of ſuch a falſe and vngodly confidence repoſed in men, that euill crept in among Chriſtians, namely the worſhipping of Saincts, whereby the Chriſtian Church, that is, the true congregation of the faythfull, hath ſuffered exceeding great hurt and incomparable ruine. For what other was the ſeruice and worſhipping of Saincts but a deuiliſh thing? When as men vſed to reaſon after this ſorte: This man was very holy that which he taught, he did, whom we wil follow, and doe the like. Hierome, Auguſtine, Gregorie ſayd this, therefore is it true, & therefore will I beleeue it. Frauncis, Benedict, Dominicke, Bartholomewe, liued thus, they did this and that, I will imitate their life and workes. Moreouer Auguſtine was ſaued by this rule, wherefore I alſo ſhall be ſaued by it. Fy, howe vnſtable and miſerable a thinge is this, they are onely lyes and dreames of men, there is not in one word mention made here of Chriſt and his word, but they are onely the vaine inuentions and trifles of men. I would vtterly breake the rule of Auguſtine, if he therefore ordayned it, thinking to be ſaued thereby. So blind and without vnderſtanding is reaſon, that it receiueth the dotages & vaine inuentions of men, when as notwithſtanding the worde of God onely is to be receiued in matters of ſaluation, as if Herod, Pilate, Caiphas, & Hannas ſhould preach the Goſpell, I ought to receiue it. Againe, if thoſe that are counted holy, ſhould riſe and preach lyes, alſo rules, habits, ſhauings, ceremonies, and ſuch like vaine inuentions of men, I ought in no wiſe to receiue them, for we muſt here haue reſpect, not to the perſons, but to that which they preach.

How the worſhipping of Saincts crept in amongſt Chriſtians.

Dooſt thou preſume to be wiſer then all the fathers & saincts, then all the Biſhops and Princes of the whole worlde? Thus may ſome man obiect againſt me. Farre be that from me. For I doe not contend to be wiſer then they. But this without controuerſie is thus, that whatſoeuer is wiſe, great, liberall, mightie & ſtrong before the world, doth ſeldom or neuer agree with ỹ word of God. For ſo it falleth out, that they that are ſuch doe for the moſt part perſecute the Goſpel, and if they were not ſo great, the Goſpell ſhould not ſo greatly ſhine forth and triumphe. The Ro-

mane

mane Emperours Hadrian, Traian, Diocletian were the most wise Cesars of all, whose gouernment was so liked of, that it was prayed of the whole world, yet they persecuted the Gospell, and could not abyde the truth. The same we find written of the Kings of the Iewes, as of Achas and others, which gouerned their kingdome very well, yet despised the word of God and disobeyed his commaundements. We in our time had neuer such Emperours or Princes, as are comparable to them. But it ought to be verified in these, that God would by foolish preaching confound the wisedome of this world, as Paule sayth 1. Cor. 1. All these thinges are shewed vnto vs in this text, which we haue in hand, which hath a simple and a slender shewe and appearance of it selfe, but it containeth many thinges in it most worthy the noting. Now how the Lord concludeth with the Pharisees, when they had shewed him the tribute money, and had answered that it was Cesars image and superscription, the Euangelist declareth: saying:

Giue therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, and giue vnto God those thinges which are Gods. Although they had deserued no such thing of the Lorde, neuertheles he teacheth them the right way. And in these wordes he confirmeth the sword and office of the Magistrate: they hoped that he would condemne and resist him, but he doth nothing lesse: for he commendeth & prayseth him, commaunding that they giue vnto him those thinges that are his. Whereby he plainly will haue, that there be Magistrates, Princes, and Rulers, vnder whose gouernment we must liue. Neither must we care whether they vse and exercise their rule and authoritie well or ill, we must haue regard onely to their power and office, for their power & authoritie is good inasmuch as it is ordained & instituted of God. Neither is there any cause why thou shouldest find fault with power, if at any time thou be oppressed by Princes and tyrannes: for whereas they abuse the power giuen vnto them of God, they shall surely be compelled to giue an account thereof. The abuse of a thing doth not make that thing euill, which is in it selfe good. A chayne of golde is good, neither is it therefore made worse, for that a harlot weareth it about her neck, or if one should put out myne eye with it, should I finde fault in the chayne therefore? In like maner the power of the Prince must be borne, for if he abuse his office, he is not to be

The sword & office of the Magistrate cõfirmed by Christ.

A similitude.

counted of me as noe Prince, neither belongeth it to me to reuenge or punish it in him. I must obey him for God his cause only, for he representeth the place of God. How grieuous thinges soeuer therefore Magistrates shall exact, I must for God his cause beare them all, and obey them, so farre as they be not contrary to Gods commaundementes. If they doe iustly or vniustly, it shall in due time appeare. Wherefore if thy substance, life and body, and whatsoeuer thou hast should be taken from thee by the Magistrates, thou maist say thus: I willingly yeeld them vnto you, and acknowledge you for Rulers ouer me, I will obey you, but whether ye vse your power and authoritie well or ill, see you to that.

What things must be giuen vnto God, & what vnto Cæsar.

Moreouer whereas Christ sayth: Giue vnto Cæsar the things that are Cæsars and vnto God those things that are Gods. We must vnderstand that vnto God pertaineth honour, we must acknowledge him for the liuing, omnipotent, and wise God, and ascribe vnto him what good thing soeuer can be named. And albeit we doe not giue him this honour, he notwithstanding easily keepeth it, for nothing is either added to, or taken from him by our honouring. Howbeit in vs he is true, omnipotent, and wise, when as we count him so and beleeue that he is such a one, as he suffereth him selfe to be sayd to be. Nowe vnto Cesar and the Magistrate feare, custome, tribute, obedience, &c. are due. God requireth especially the hart, the Magistrate the body and goods, ouer which he executeth his office in ŷ place of God, which S. Paule doth most notably in plaine and manifest wordes declare Rom. 13. Let euery soule be subiect vnto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoeuer therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receiue to them selues condemnation. For Magistrates are not to be feared for good workes, but for euill. Wilt thou then be without feare of the power? doe well: so shalt thou haue praise of the same. For he is the Minister of God for thy wealth, but if thou doe euill, feare: for he beareth not the sword for nought: for he is the minister of God to take vengeance on him that doth euill. Wherfore ye must be subiect, not because of wrath onely, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause ye pay also tribute: for they are Gods ministers, applying them selues for the same thinge.

Giue

Giue to all men therefore their dutie, tribute to whom ye owe tribute: cuſtome, to whom cuſtome: feare, to whom feare: honour, to whom ye owe honour. And therefore alſo are Magiſtrates ordayned of God, that they may defende & maintaine publike peace, which alone exceedeth all worldly good thinges: we felt a litle in the laſt cõmotion of the common people, what loſſe miſerie, calamitie and grieuous ſorow conſpiracie and ſedition bringeth in the world. God graunt that it may ſo continue, that we trie it no more. Thus much ſhall ſuffize to haue bene ſpoken for the expoſition of this text.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, TEACHING THAT SALVATION COMETH by Chriſt alone.

Ioh. 6.

Verſe. 44. NO man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him: & I will rayſe him vp at the laſt day.

45 It is writtẽ in the Prophets: And they ſhall be all taught of God. Euery man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh vnto me.

46 Not that any man hath ſeene the Father, ſaue he which is of God, he hath ſeene the Father.

47 Verely, verely I ſay vnto you. He that beleeueth in me, hath euerlaſting life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eate Manna in the wildernes, and are dead.

50 This is that bread which cõmeth down from heauen, that he which eateth of it, ſhoulde not die.

51 I am that liuing breade, which came downe from heauen: if any man eate of this bread, he ſhall liue for euer: and the breade that I will giue, is my fleſh, which I will giue for the life of the world.

The ſumme of this text.

1 *CHriſt is knowen of none, but of him whom the Father draweth, that is, except the Father teache vs that knowledge inwardly in the heart. Therefore Chriſt ſayth to Peter. Matth. 16.* Fleſh and blood hath not reuealed it vnto thee, but my Father which is in heauen.

2 *Chriſt is the wiſedom of God, which is of more price thẽ precious ſtones, and whatſoeuer can be wiſhed, is not to be compared vnto it, as Salomon ſayth in the Prouerbs.*

Pro. 8. 11.

3 *The old heauenly bread, that is the righteouſnes of the lawe doth not iuſtifie: But Chriſt, if we beleeue in him, iuſtifieth for euer.*

The expoſition of the text.

THis text teacheth vs nothing els but chriſtiã faith, and ſtirreth it vp in vs as ſurely Iohn through his Goſpel, doth almoſt no other thing but inſtruct vs, how we muſt beleeue in the Lord Chriſt. And ſuch a faith as is grounded on the true promiſe of God made vnto vs in Chriſt, ſhall ſaue vs, as this text plainely declareth. Alſo they are here all proued fooles, which haue taught vs an other way and meanes to obtaine righteouſnes. Whatſoeuer mãs mynd cã inuẽt, although it be holy, although it haue a fayre ſhew before men, it muſt needes vtterly fal, if that he wil haue ſalnation to come thereby. For albeit that man is exerciſed with the duties of godlines, he ſhall not be able to attaine vnto heauen, vnles

Onely faith in Chriſt ſaueth vs.

Of this double faith Paule speaketh Rom. 1. By the Gospell righteousnes which God giueth, is reuealed from faith to faith. What meaneth this, from faith to faith? nothing els, but that albeit the faith of the Fathers and our faith is the same, wherby it is beleeued in Christ either to come, or which hath already appeared: yet the Gospell doth lead from their faith to ours, so that it is now necessarie not onely to beleeue the promise that was to be fulfilled, but also that it is fulfilled, which it did not behoue Abraham and the other Fathers to beleeue, although they had the same Christ which we haue. For there is one fayth, one spirit, one Christ, one communion of all Saincts, this difference onely there is betweene vs, that they went before Christ, we follow him.

We haue therefore beleeued, and we doe also beleeue, to wit the Fathers and we, with a like and common faith in the same Christ, although not after the same maner, as it is saide. And as by reason of this communion of faith which we haue a like in the same Christ, we say: we haue beleeued, or we did beleeue, when as not we, but the Fathers haue beleeued or did beleeue, so they againe did say, that they should heare, see, and beleeue in Christ, when as not they, but we do liue in that time. We reade not in a few places of the Scriptures, that they which were before the incarnation of Christ, tooke vpon them the person of them which are after it, and they which are after it, of them which were before it, because of the communion of faith, and the same Christ, which they haue in common, and so there is as it were one companie of beleeuers. Now whereas the Apostle saith, that salvation is now neerer vnto vs then when we beleeued, that is, when our Fathers those aunciente beleeuers did looke for it to come, we must not vnderstād it of the neerenes of possession, as though we now had it neerer and more certainly then they, for the Fathers had altogither the same faith, as it is sayd, and the same Christ, wherefore saluation was as neere vnto them as vnto vs. For Christ yesterday, and to day, the same also is for euer. Heb. 13. Christ continueth the same from the beginning of the world euen vnto the end, by whom all are saued alike. But Paul speaketh of the neerenes of reuealing, that whatsoeuer thinges were saide before concerning Christ, they were now fulfilled, death being ouercome, the Lord did sit at the right hand of the Fa-

How saluatiō is neerer vnto vs then it was to the beleuers before Christes incarnation.

ther, the Gospell was preached abroad in the world, by which Christ did come vnto all in the whole world, for this cause Paul sayth that our saluation is nearer then when it was hiden, and knowne vnto few men: because that Christ being not yet glorified, it was not meete that the preaching of saluation should be made publike or common.

Whereas therefore the Apostle sayth here, Our saluation is now neerer vs, he sayth the same thing in the Epistle to Titus in other wordes: The grace of God which bringeth saluation, hath appeared, that is, hath sprong forth, and is euery where commonly preached: although it was not hid before in any of the Saincts, notwithstanding it was not yet commõly knowne vnto the world. After the same sort the Scripture speaketh in many places, when it sometime saith that Christ is to come, sometime that he is come, although he alwayes hath bin, and is in all the elect. Howbeit because he had not before his resurrection come to all by publike preaching, the Scripture speaketh diuersly of his comming. For because of this publike preaching he came in the flesh, being made man, for his incarnation had not bin profitable to any, if the Gospell had not thereupon bin preached, by which he came into the whole world, and whereby it is commonly knowne, why he was made man, whereby that blessing promised to Abraham, is now published, and made common to all which by the Gospell beleeue in Christ. Hereupon Paul sayth verie well, Rom. 1. that the Gospell was promised of God, &c. as though he would say, although God hath promised euerie where in the writings of the Prophets his sonne in the flesh, yet forasmuch as all that should be done, that the Gospell might be preached abroad in the world, whereby he commeth spiritually to the myndes of the beleeuers, (which comming onely bringeth saluation, and is farre to be preferred before that comming in the flesh, inasmuch as it was done because of this) I say rather that God promised by the Prophetes in the Scripture the Gospell concerning his sonne. For God considered the Gospell and our faith in all these thinges, for which he would also haue him to be made man, that the Gospel might be preached of him, that being made man, he hath saued vs by his death, and that the saluation which he hath wrought, might go into the whole world, and be made neere vnto all. Some haue taught fower commings of Christ,

The cõming of Christ by the preaching of the Gospell.

Chriſt, accoꝛding to the fower ſundayes in Aduent as they call it, but this comming of Chriſt by the Goſpell, which is moſt neceſſarie of all, and of which all do depend, of which Paule here ſpeaketh, this cõming I ſay, they could not ſee, inaſmuch as they are ignoꝛaunt, both what the Goſpell is, and to what end it was giuen. They babble many thinges of the comming of Chriſt, and neuertheles they dꝛiue him further from themſelues, thẽ heauen is diſtaunt from the earth. Foꝛ what can Chriſt pꝛofit any man, which doth not poſſeſſe him by faith? oꝛ how can any man poſſeſſe him by faith, where the Goſpell is not pꝛeached?

The night is paſſed and the day is at hand: His meaning in effect is, that ſaluation is at hande. Foꝛ by the daye Paule vnderſtandeth the Goſpell, namely, that it is that daye, whereby our hearts and mindes are enlightned, therefoꝛe ſuch a day being ſpꝛong, our ſaluation is certainly at hand, that is, Chriſt and his grace pꝛomiſed in time paſt to Abꝛaham, hath ſhined foꝛth by pꝛeaching in the whole woꝛld, giueth light vnto all men, raiſeth all out of ſleepe, ſheweth true and eternall good thinges, wherein we may be hereafter occupied, and may walke honeſtly in this day. Contrariwiſe, by the night all doctrine is to be vnderſtood, which is not the Goſpell, beſide which none can bꝛing ſaluation. But if thou do a litle moꝛe exactly wey the woꝛdes, thou ſhalt ſee that Paule deſcribeth that part of the daye, which is moſt delectable of all, and moſt full of all pleaſauntnes, namely the ioyfull and amiable moꝛning, and the riſing of the ſunne. Foꝛ it is the moꝛning when the night is gone and ended, and the daye is nowe come, whereupon all thinges are meruelouſly cheered and recreated, the birdes ſing, other lyuing creatures doe ſtirre vp with alacritie and ioyfulnes: men being as it were made aliue againe, doe goe foꝛth to their labours: all thinges, the daye ſpꝛinging, and the moꝛning ſhining, are ſo affected, as though the woꝛld were renued, and all thinges reſtoꝛed to life againe.

By the daye what is ſignified.

What is here ment by the night.

Wherefoꝛe in many places of the Scripture, the ioyfull, pꝛoſperous, and quickning pꝛeaching of the Goſpell is likened to the moꝛning and the riſing of the ſunne, as it is here of Paule who calleth the Goſpell the day ſpꝛinging oꝛ aꝛiſing. Alſo Pſal. 110. In the daye of thy power ſhall the people offer thee free will offeringes, of the wombe of the morning ſhall the dewe of

The preaching of the Goſpell likened to the morning.

thy children ſpring. Here alſo the Goſpell is plainely called the wombe of the morning, and the daye of the power of Chriſt, wherein we are conceiued and borne the children of God as dewe, to wit, without the labour of men, by the onely grace of the holie Ghoſt from heauen. The moſt pleaſaunt and comfortable ſunne Jeſus Chriſt maketh this daye, whom the Scripture hereupon calleth the ſunne of righteouſnes. God ſayth Mala. 4. To you that feare my name, ſhall that ſunne of righteouſnes ariſe, and health ſhalbe vnder his winges. For as many as beleeue in Chriſt, do receiue of him the beames of his grace and righteouſnes, and doe obtaine ſaluation vnder his winges. Whereupon it is ſayde Pſal. 118. This is the daye which the Lord hath made, we will reioyce and be glad in it, as though he ſayde: This corporall ſunne maketh the corporall daye, but God himſelfe maketh this daye, euen he is that ſunne, from whence thoſe beames and that daye come, wherewith the whole world is enlightned. Finally, hereupon he calleth himſelfe the light of the world, Iohn 9. And Pſalme. 19. The heauens declare the glorie of God, that is, euen as theſe bodily heauens do bring the ſunne and the day, and the ſunne is caried in them, ſo the Apoſtles haue in themſelues, and bring by preaching, the true ſunne, which is Chriſt, &c: Whereupon it followeth: In the heauens he hath ſet a tabernacle for the ſunne, which commeth forth as a bridegrome out of his chamber, & reioyceth as a giant to runne his courſe. His ſetting forth is from the vtmoſt part of heauen, and his circuite vnto the vtmoſt part thereof: & there is nothing hid from his heat, All this is ſaid of the exceeding pleaſant beginning or riſing of this day, that is of the Goſpel, which the Scripture euery where meruelouſly ſetteth forth. For it is a word which quickneth, maketh glad, willing, cheerefull, and ready to do good workes, and finally it bringeth with it all good thinges. Wherefore it is called the Goſpell or glad tydinges, for that it is a pleaſaunt, and proſperous meſſage of the grace of God, and of all good thinges.

Chriſt the ſunne of righteouſnes.

But who is able to rehearſe all thoſe thinges, which this day reuealeth & maketh manifeſt vnto vs? For it teacheth all thinges, what God is, what we are, whatſoeuer is paſt, and to come, of heauen, hell, the earth, Angels and Deuils. By this lampe is ſhewed vnto vs, how we ought to behaue our ſelues in all theſe thinges

The Goſpell reuealeth vnto vs all thinges that are needeful for vs to know.

thinges, and toward all, from whence we are, and whither we go. Yet neuertheles Satan hath deceiued vs miserable creatures, that neglecting such a day, whereby all thinges might be cleere and manifest vnto vs, we seeke the truth of Philosophers and heathen men, who haue not so much as by a dreame knowne any whit of these thinges, and so we haue suffered our selues to be blynded with mens traditions, and to be thrust backe againe into the night. For it is not light, whatsoeuer is not this day, otherwise Paule and the whole Scripture should in vaine extoll this day alone, and call all other beside it the night. Surely the burden of Gods displeasure must needes be most grieuous, for that contrarie to so plaine and manifest places of Scripture, we haue sought an other light, although the Lord himselfe calleth himselfe the light and sunne of the worlde. And if other proofes were wantinge, this one is sufficient, that vniuersities doe so impudently both set vp and glorie of Aristotle as a light vnto them, in whom they exercise them selues much more then in Christ, yea nothing in Christ, but altogither in Aristotle.

Let vs therefore cast awaye the workes of darkenes, and let vs put on the armour of light. As Christ is the sunne, and the Gospell the daye, so faith is the light whereby to see and watch in this daye. For it would not profit, albeit the sunne did shine, and make the day, if the eyes did not perceiue the light. Wherefore although the Gospell be begunne and preached in the whole worlde, yet none are lightened, but they that receiue it, and by fayth being made capable of the light, doe arise out of sleepe. But to them that as yet sleepe this sunne and day bring no profite, of which they receiue no light, no more then if no sunne or daye had shined. And this is that season and hower, whereof he speaketh: Welbeloued brethren, forasmuch as we know this, that it is now time that we should arise out of sleepe, &c. It is a spirituall time and season, although begunne in this outward time, as it doth daily also come, wherein we ought to arise out of sleepe, and lay a side the workes of darkenes. Whereby Paule sheweth that he doth not speake to them, which are yet voide of faith: for as it is sayde, he teacheth not faith here, but the workes and frutes of fayth, when as he saith: We knowe that the time is come, and that the night being passed, the daye

By light is here signified & ment faith.

is at hande: they which beleeue not can not know these thinges. Now if thou obiect and saye, what reason or cause is there that he should write these thinges to the faithfull, inasmuch as they know that it is time? &c. Thou must call to mynde that in the beginning of the exposition of this text of the Apostle, we haue saide that the office of preaching is of two sortes, one of teaching, an other of exhorting and mouing. Now a man can not attaine vnto that knowledge, that it should not be needefull that he be alwayes moued, and kept in a continuall and fresh meditation of those thinges which he hath learned, least the deuell, the world, and the flesh (which are enemies that neuer graunt truce, neither slacke their assault) doe make him wearie and slouthfull, that he maye at the last sleepe, and become altogither negligent in good thinges. For the deuill, sayth Peter, is such an enemie, as goeth about continually like a roring Lion, seeking whom he maye deuoure: Wherefore he sayth: Watch and be sober. Paule also will haue vs doe the same thinge here. For seeinge that the Deuill, the flesh, and the worlde keepe no meane, nor make no ende of fightinge against vs, neither must there be any meane kept or ende made of exhortinge, prouokinge, and mouinge vs to watche and worke. Hereupon the holie Ghost is called an exhorter, inasmuch as he inuiteth and moueth vs vnto good.

We haue neede of continuall exhortation.

For the same cause Paule also vseth here chosen wordes: the workes of darkenes he calleth not armour, but the workes of light he calleth armour, not workes: vndoutedly that he might shewe, that there is a fight, that labour and trauell is required, and that it can not be obtained without perill, to watche and liue well, forasmuch as so mightie enemies, the deuill, the flesh, and the world do without ceasing fight against vs, wherefore Job sayth chapter 7. The life of man vpon earth is a fight and tentation. Nowe it is not a small matter to stand all our life long in the battaill, wherefore there is neede of verie shrill trumpets and warlike drummes, that is of earnest admonitions and exhortations, whereby we may be stirred vp and encouraged to perseuer valiauntlie in the fight. Hereupon nowe it appeareth, why he calleth good workes armour or weapone, and calleth not the workes of darkenes so, which notwithstanding,

Paul calleth the works of light armour, and why.

if

if we consent vnto them are also weapons, Rom. 6. Giue not your members as weapons of vnrighteousnes. Againe it is before saide, that by light is here signified faith, which from the day of the Gospell by the sunne Christ, shineth into our heartes, and enlighteneth them, therfore the armour or weapons of light are nothinge else but the workes of this fayth. Contrariwise, darkenes is infidelitie or vnbeleefe, which is by reason of the absence of the Gospel as of the day, and of Christ as of the sunne. This darkenes the deuill doth rule, which commeth from the doctrine of men, and the iudgement of mans owne reason: wherfore the workes of darkenes, are the workes of infidelitie. For as Christ is the Lord and gouernour of the light, which we said to be fayth: so Paul Ephes. 6. calleth Satan the prince of darkenes, that is, of them which are without faith, and refuse to be obedient to God, as the same Apostle witnesseth 2. Corinth. 4. If our Gospel be then hyd, it is hyd to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world (namely the Deuill) hath blinded the mindes, that is, of the infidels, that the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ should not shine vnto them. But what both this armour or weapons of light, and workes of darknes are, it is now taught of the Apostle.

The armour of light what it is.

The workes of darkenes what they are.

Let vs walke honestly as in the day. No man worketh those things in the day, which he is wont to worke in darkenes, euerie one feareth an other, and endeuoureth himselfe to liue honestly. It is commonly sayd: the night is void of shame, which is true, and therefore men doe those thinges in the night, which they would be ashamed to do in the daye, but the daye is not without shame, and requireth an honest conuersation. After the same sort ought a Christian life to be: a Christian ought to commit nothing, whereof he may be ashamed, although the whole world should see his workes & doinges. For he that liueth and worketh so, that he is vnwilling that all his workes and doinges should be seene and heard of all men, and his whole life be manifestly knowne vnto all, liueth a life vnworthie of Christ, according to that which our Sauiour himselfe sayth Joh. 3. Euerie man that doth euill, hateth the light, neither commeth to light, least his deedes should be reproued. But he that doth truth, commeth to the light, that his deedes might be made manifest, that they are wrought according to God. Hereby it appeareth how ne-

The life of a Christian.

ceſſarie it is, that we ſhould be prouoked and exhorted to watch and to put on the armour of light. For what one is there at this day among Chriſtians, which can abide, that all his workes ſhould be publiſhed openly in the light. Now what a Chriſtian life is this, how hypocritically do we liue, when as we can not ſuffer our life ſo much as to be diſcloſed before men, which now is diſcloſed before God and all his Angels, and in the laſt day ſhalbe diſcloſed before all creatures? Wherefore it behoueth a Chriſtian to liue ſo, as he deſireth to appeare in in laſt day, and before all. Hereupon Paul ſaith: Walke as the children of light: the frute of the Spirit is goodnes, and righteouſnes, and truth. And Rom. 12: Procure thinges honeſt, not onely in the ſight of God, but alſo in the ſight of all men. And 2. Cor. 1. Our reioycing is this the teſtimonie of our conſcience, that in ſimplicitie and godly purenes, and not in fleſhly wiſedome, but by the grace of God we haue had our conuerſation in the world. How beit ſuch a life ſhall nothing at all appeare, where faith is not, but where a liuely, a cheereſull and a ſtrong faith is, there ſuch a life can not be wanting, forasmuch as ſuch a faith is not wearied with well doing, neither ſleepeth. Wherefore it is no leſſe neceſſarie, to preach to them that haue receiued the doctrine of faith, whereby they maye be prouoked and ſtirred vp to go on in the good life which they haue embraced, and that they ſuffer not themſelues to be ouercome by the aſſaults of the raging fleſh, the craftie world, and moſt ſuttle Satan, then it is meete that the doctrine of faith be preached to them that be as yet ignorant of Chriſt.

Eph. 5. 8. 9.

Preaching & exhortation neceſſary for them that do already beleeue.

Not in gluttonie and drunkennes, neither in chambering and wantonnes, nor in ſtrife and enuying. Here he rehearſeth the workes of darkeneſſe by name, one of which he named alſo before, to wit, ſleepe, according to that ſaying 1. Theſſal. 5: Let vs not ſleepe as doe other, but let vs watch and be ſober. Not that he forbiddeth naturall ſleepe, but ſpirituall, which is infidelitie, whereof thoſe workes of the fleſh proceede: howbeit naturall ſleepe alſo is a worke of darkenes, if it be vſed for pleaſure, and through immoderate filling of the belly, ſo that it is a hindrance to the light, that is, faith, and to the armour thereof. Moreouer theſe ſix workes of darkenes which he here rehearſeth, doe comprehend all the reſt. For Gal. 5. and Coloſſ. 3. he reckneth vp-

Paule by ſix workes of darkenes cõprehendeth all the reſt.

moe

moe of them but we will diuide those, which he here rehearseth, into two sides, the right and the left. On the right side these fower fight with the spirit, gluttonie, drunkennes, chambering and wantonnes: on the left side (forasmuch as the left side in the Scriptures signifieth aduersitie) those thinges which proceede from thence do fight, as are wrath, contention and such like: but the right side signifieth prosperitie, and those thinges which ensue thereof, as delightes, gluttonie, drunkennes, and ouermuch sleepe, &c. Now it is sufficiently manifest, that Paul vnder two workes of darkenes here rehearsed, namely, contention and enuying, doth comprehend the rest also of that sort, amonge which are bitternes, anger, wrath, crying and euill speaking. Eph. 4. And those which he rehearseth in the Epistle to the Galathians: Hatred, debate, emulation, seditions, heresies, murthers, &c. In a summe, hereunto pertaineth whatsoeuer come of euill anger, either in wordes or deedes, all which can not be numbred. After the same sort vnder those fower, gluttonie, drunkennes, chambering and wantonnes, he comprehendeth the vices of lust, which are wont to be committed as well in wordes as workes, which also no man is able to number. And so the present wordes of the Apostle doe shewe, neither needeth it any further declaration, that by these six workes all thinges are to be vnderstood, whereby they that are boyd of fayth, and are yet in darkenes, do liue vnpurely as concerning themselues, and vniustly toward their neighbours, whose whole life is disordered and out of course both toward themselues and toward others. For there is no man that knoweth not what it is to be gluttonous and dronken, that is, either to eate or drinke aboue a measure necessarie for the body, it is as well knowne, what it is to sleepe in chambers, and to be wanton, that is, to follow the pleasure of the body, both with sleeping aboue measure, and with other lewd and vnchast gestures and workes, which are wont to be committed in chambers of full fedde, well tipled, idle and slouthfull bellies, as well in the daye, as in the night, as well when they are alone, as in the resort and companie of others. All which thinges do require euen naturall darkenes, and secret places, and are signified of Paule by chambering and wantonnes.

But put ye on the Lord Iesus Christ. In these wordes as it

were in a ſumme, he ſheweth all the armour of light, when as he exhorteth vs to put on Chriſt. Now Chriſt is put on of vs after two ſortes: firſt when we are clothed with his righteouſnes, which is done by faith, wherewith he that is endued, beleeueth that Chriſt for him died, and fulfilled all thinges. For not ours, but Chriſtes righteouſnes hath reconciled vs to the Father and deliuered vs from ſynnes. And ſo to put on Chriſt pertaineth to the doctrine of faith, which teacheth that Chriſt was giuen vnto vs, and is vnto vs in ſtede of a pledge. Whereof Paule ſpeaketh Galat. 3. All ye that are baptized into Chriſt, haue put on Chriſt. The other maner of putting on Chriſt is, when we wey and conſider, that he is giuen vnto vs alſo in ſteede of an example, that we ſhould ſhewe our ſelues ſeruiceable toward our neighbours, being endued with the ſame vertues, with which we by fayth acknowledge that he being adorned, did ſerue vs, that ſo we may reſemble him in all points: and of this maner of putting on Chriſt Paule ſpeaketh here. The ſame alſo he willeth vs to doe 1. Corinth. 15. when he ſayth: As we haue borne the image of the earthly, ſo let vs now beare the image of the heauenly. And Epheſ. 4. Caſt ye of concerning the conuerſation in times paſt, that olde man, which is corrupt through the deceiuable luſtes, and be renewed in the ſpirit of your minde, and put on the newe man, which after God is created vnto righteouſnes, and true holines. Now in Chriſt we ſee nothinge but the armoure of light, no glutonie, no drunkenneſſe, but faſting, temperancie, keeping vnder of the fleſh by diuers laboures, traueiling, preaching, praying, and doing well to all men, in him was no place for ſlouthfulneſſe or ſuperfluous ſleepe, much leſſe for wantõnes, but a meruelous chaſtitie and puritie: he accuſtomed himſelfe to watche, to ariſe earlie, to lie on the ground in the field, hauing neither houſe, neither chamber, nor bedde: in him was no wrath, contention or brawlinge, but altogether goodneſſe, ſweeteneſſe, meekeneſſe, charitie, mercie, patience, &c. Wherefore where as Paule ſayth here byeflie: Put ye on the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, it is as much as that we ſhould ſet him before vs as an example to follow.

Chriſt is put on two maner of wayes.

Coloſ. 3. 12. He teacheth the Coloſſians the ſame thing in ſomewhat more wordes after this ſort: Now therefore as the elect of God holy and

and beloued,put on the bowels of mercie, kindnes, humblenes of minde,meekenes,long ſuffering: forbearing one an other,& forgiuing one an other, if any man haue a quarell to an other: euen as Chriſt forgaue, euen ſo doe ye. And aboue all theſe thinges put on loue which is the bond of perfectnes: and let the peace of God rule in your hartes, to the which ye are called in one body,and be ye thankefull. **And Philip. 2. after yͤ he had exhorted them to loue one an other,and that euery man ſhoulde eſteeme other better then himſelfe, and ſeeke to pleaſure & do for other, he alſo ſetteth Chriſt before them as an example, who ſhewed him ſelfe to vs our ſeruaunt,& ſayth:** Let the ſame minde be in you that was euen in Chriſt Ieſus,who being in the forme of God thought it no robberie to be equall with God. But he made him ſelfe of no reputation,and tooke on him the forme of a ſeruaunt,and was made like vnto men, & was found in ſhape as a man. **The ſumme therefore is this: the armour or weapons of light are good workes, contrary to thoſe workes of darkenes gluttonie,drunkennes, chambering, wantonnes,contention, and enuying,ſuch workes are,to faſt,to watch, to pray,to labour, to ſuffer hunger,thirſt,colde, heat,to be chaſt,to vſe modeſtie, temperancie,goodnes, and that I doe not thruſt in too many of mine owne wordes, let vs heare Paul him ſelfe rehearſing them in order Gal. 5.** The frutes of the ſpirit is loue,ioy,peace,longe ſuffering,gentlenes,goodnes,faith,meekenes,temperancie. **But he rehearſeth them farre more at large. 2. Cor. 6. ſaying:** We beſeech you that ye receiue not the grace of God in vaine: for he ſaith, I haue heard thee in a time accepted,and in the day of ſaluation haue I ſuccoured thee:behold nowe the accepted time, behold now the day of ſaluation,**as if he ſayd: Our ſaluation is now neerer vnto vs then when we beleeued,to wit, that it would come to paſſe,that theſe dayes of ſaluation, in which the Goſpell is preached abroad to the whole worlde, ſhoulde appeare. It is time therefore to ariſe out of ſleepe:** Let vs giue no occaſion of offence in any thinge, that our miniſterie be not reprehended. But in all thinges, Let vs approue our ſelues as the Miniſters of God,in much patience in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes,in priſons,in tumults, in labours:by watchings ,by faſtings,by purity,by knowledge,by long ſuffering,by kindenes, by the holy Ghoſt,by loue vnfeyned: By the word of truth, by

The armour of light.

the power of God, by the armour of righteousnes on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by euill report and good report, as deceiuers, and yet true: as vnknowne, and yet knowne: as dying, and behold we liue: as chastened, and yet not killed: as sorrowing, and yet alway reioycing: as poore, and yet making many rich: as hauing nothing, and yet possessing all thinges. See what a plentifull and very golden streame floweth out of the mouth of Paul. Herof I think we most plainely perceiue, what is the armour of light, wherewith we must be fenced and fortified both on the right hand, and on the left.

A most excellent and perfect example for all Christians to follow.

Now this most stily agreeth with the matter, whereas he setteth before vs a most excellent and perfect example, namely the Lord him selfe, saying: Put ye on the Lord Iesus Christ. For he is a sluggish beast and not a man, who when he seeth his Lorde fast, suffer hunger, labour, watch and to be wearie, yet giueth him selfe to gluttonie, sleepe, and pleasures. What Lorde could take these things at his seruaunts hand, nay what seruaunt durst presume to doe these thinges? So it can not be that a Christian man should not be ashamed, when he beholdeth Christ, and seeth himself so vnlike vnto him, yea occupied in quite cõtrary things. For whom the example of Christ him selfe doth not stirre vp, exhort, and moue, who can bringe or stirre him vp vnto goodnes? What would the leaues of wordes doe with their small noyse, if these thundrings of the example of Christ doe not moue? And surely for this cause Paule of purpose adioyned this word, Lord, saying: Put ye on the Lord Iesus Christ, as if he sayd: count it no great nor burdenous thinge, to stand and fight in this armour of light, ye that are seruaunts, behold your Lord, who when he had no neede, did notwithstãding so wel & valiantly vse this armour, and fought in it for you.

And take no thought for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it. The Apostle in these few words hath noted two cares of the flesh: One is naturall, whereby necessarie foode and apparell is prouided for the body, that it may liue, and be able to sustaine his labour, lest that it be by ouermuch abstinence weakened, and made vnprofitable to worke. The other care is ioyned with sinne, when the body is prouided for to fulfill the lustes thereof, and that it may be delighted: this care the Apostle here forbiddeth, for it ingendreth the workes of darkenes, so to pamper and make of the

Lawfull care for the flesh.

Vnlawfull prouision & care for the flesh.

flesh,

flesh, which is continually to be chastised, that it may be obedient to the spirit, and may not shake of the sitter, like vnto an vntamed horse, albeit that chastising is so to be tempered, that the body notwithstanding may doe his dutie, and beare the sitter. For as the fodder, the whippe and the burden belongeth vnto the asse: so meat, correction, and worke vnto the seruaunt. Ecclesiastic. 33. He doth not say that thou shalt flea or slay the asse, neither that thou shalt kill the seruaunt, or cast him into prison: so vnto the body the chastising and labour thereof is due, and necessary foode is not to be withheld from it. Paule himselfe sayth: I tame my body, and bringe it into subiection. He sayth not, I cast it into sicknes, or I kill it, but I subdue it to the spirit, that it may serue, and be obedient thereunto. 1.Cor.9.27.

Moreouer these wordes, to fulfill the lustes thereof, Paul added because of two sortes of men, whereof the first vnder a pretence of naturall necessitie, doe satisfie their pleasure, and couer that practize vnder this false pretence. We are so prone and ready vnto this, that euen many of the Saincte haue very much complayned of this euil, and because of it, haue oftentimes aboue measure afflicted their bodies: for the flesh is so craftie and meruelous suttle to prepare delightes for it selfe, that no mã cã sufficiently take heede of it, yea it is needefull that a man here doo neuer leaue to care and feare. The other sort of men are those blind holy ones, which thinke that the kingdome of God and the righteousnes thereof consisteth in meates and drinke, and in chosen apparell, and doe beside their owne worke regard nothing: when they haue so fasted, that they haue made their head diseased, and their stomacke distempered, and doe bring vnto their body some great infirmitie or sickues, they then thinke that they haue bene meruelous holy, and haue wrought incomparable good workes. But Paule sayth: Meate maketh vs not acceptable to God, for neither if we eate, haue we the more: neither if we eate not, haue we the lesse. And Colos. 2. he writeth thus much in effect: Beware of the worshipping of Angells, which hath a shew of wisedom because of humblenes and superstition, whereby they spare not the body, while they withdraw from it the measure of foode due vnto it, bestowing nothing vpon it whereby it may be fedde. This preposterous worshipping of Angells, yea in deed superstition, did so deceiue Gerson, otherwise a notable man, that he

We are prone & ready to fulfill the lustes of the flesh.

Superstitious fasting & abstinence frõ meates. 1.Cor.8.8.

prayſed the Charterhouſe Monkes, for that they did ſo conſtantly abſtaine from fleſh, that euen when they were ſicke they would eate none, although they might preſerue them ſelues euen from death thereby. But what, if God ſhall iudge them as killers of their owne body? For there can be none at all either ordinaunce or order, yea or vow contrary to the commaundement of God, & if there be any ſuch, ſurely it ought to be of no force, euē as if thou hadſt vowed adulterie.

Neceſſarie prouiſion muſt be made for the body.

Now God both here by Paule, and elswhere hath commaunded, that neceſſary prouiſion ſhould be made for the body, and hath forbidden that we ſhould procure the death of it: wherefore thoſe thinges that are profitable to preſerue it, whether they be fleſh or egges, or any thing elſe, muſt be giuen vnto it, in what day or time ſoeuer, whether it be the firſt or firſt day of the weeke, whether it be in Lēt or after Eaſter, in the meane ſeaſon whatſoeuer orders, lawes, and vowes, yea euen of the Pope being neglected. For it is not lawfull for any man, no not for the Angells to forbid any thing againſt the commaundement of God. Howbeit this madnes proceedeth from that darkenes and blindenes, wherby miſerable men doe regarde the worke onely, and thinke that they ſhall obtaine ſaluation through the greatnes and multitude of workes. But Paule willeth that our faſtings and other chaſtiſings of the fleſh be the weapons of light, whereby the workes of darkenes may be ouercome, and not the body deſtroyed: wherefore there ought to be no other vſe among Chriſtians of faſtings, watchings and labours. As it is al one before God whether thou eate fiſh or fleſh: whether thou drinke wine or water: whether thou weare redde or greene garmentes: all theſe are the good creatures of God, made vnto this ende, that we may vſe them: haue regard only to this, that thou mayſt vſe them with a meane, and mayſt abſtaine thy ſelfe ſo much from them, as ſhall ſuffize to ouercome the workes of darkenes. Wherefore it is vnpoſſible that a common maner of this abſtinence ſhould be appointed indifferently to all: for the conſtitution of all mens bodies is not alike, it is aboue meaſure to one, which to an other is vnder meaſure: one hath neede of much, an other of little, and therefore is it meete that euery one haue regard of him ſelfe, and gouerne his owne body, according to the preſent doctrine of Paule, whereas he ſayth: Take no thought for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſtes there-

The true end of faſting.

One common maner of faſting can not be appointed to all.

of,

of, that is, obey the wisedom thereof so farre, that ye deny not ỳ necessary things which it requireth, but graunt it not those things, which it requireth to the fulfilling of ỳ lustes thereof, more then necessitie, to pleasure onely. If a better rule of moderation could haue bene giuen beside this, Paule would not haue concealed it.

Popish ordinances forbidding the eating of flesh contrary to the Gospell.

Hereby thou seest, that the popish ordinances, which forbid the eating of flesh and certaine meates, are quite contrarie to the Gospell: Which Paule hath plainly foretolde. 1. Tim. 4. The Spirit, sayth he, speaketh euidently, that in the latter times some shal depart from the faith, & shall giue heede vnto spirits of errour, & doctrines of deuils, which speake lyes through hypocrisie, forbidding to marie, and commaunding to abstaine from meates, which God hath created to be receiued with giuing thankes. No man surely can deny that these wordes doe briefly reproue the orders of Monkes and sacrificing Priestes, so cleare and manifest are both these wordes, and also their preposterous religion. Moreouer thou seest here also, godly Reader, that Paul doth not teach that dotage & womanly holines of certaine, which choose vnto themselues certaine dayes, wherein to fast to certaine Sainctes, one to this, an other to that, all which are blinde proceedings, and builded vpon their owne workes. True religion is, without choyse of meates and dayes, all the life long to vse modestie and sobrietie. For seeing that these must be the armour of light, and that it is requisite that our life be vndefiled & chast, it behoueth vs surely neuer to put of this armour, but we must be found alwayes sober, temperate, watching, labouring and praying. But those doting holy ones one day eate nothing but bread & water, & afterward, three whole moneths they daily be drunken and eate excessiuely, euen vntill they be not well in their wits. Others fast so, that at ỳ euening they eate no meate, but in ỳ meane season they make them selues drunke with drinking. Who is able to reherse all their dotages and all their works of darkenes? all which proceede from hence, for that foolish men consider & regard the worke, & not the vse of the worke, they make of armour a glasse, they are altogither ignorant, whereunto it is profitable to fast and abstaine: they are like vnto him which caried a sword to the ende, that he might looke vpon it, and knew not how to vse it, when he was beaten. These thinges may suffize to haue bene spoken for the exposition of this text.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHEREIN IS TAVGHT HOW THE FAITHFVLL ought to reioyce in God, & let their patient mind be knowne vnto men.

Philip. 4.

Verse 4. REioyce in the Lord alway, againe I say, reioyce.

5 Let your patient mind be knowne vnto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be nothinge carefull, but in all thinges let your requests be shewed vnto God in praier & supplication with giuing of thanks.

7 And the peace of God which passeth all vnderstanding, shall preserue your harts & mindes in Christ Iesus.

THis text in deede is but short, neuertheles it doth most plentifully abound with right Christian doctrine, instructing first howe we ought to behaue our selues toward God, secondly, how toward our neighbours, saying first: Reioyce in the Lord alway. This ioy is a frute of faith, most certainely following it, as Paule witnesseth Gal. 5. where he sayth: The frute of the Spirit is loue, ioy, peace, longe suffering, gentlenes, goodnes, faith, meekenes, temperance, &c. Neither can it be that that hart should reioyce in the Lorde, which hath not yet beleeued in him. Whereupon it commeth to passe, that where no faith is, there can be nothing but feare, trembling, horrour, and sadnes, as often as such either remember God, or heare him named: yea hatred and enmitie

Ioy in the Lord a frute of faith, without which there is no true ioy but sadnes & feare.

emnitie of God remaineth in ſuch harts, the cauſe whereof is, for that ꝑ hart voyde of faith, findeth it ſelfe defiled with ſinnes, wherby it douteth not but that it hath deſerued the vengeance of God, that ſinnes can not be but hated of God which is iuſt, & ſo, when it doth not beleeue that God will be merciſull and fauourable vnto it, how can it not but deteſt all memorie of him? ſo farre is it of that it can reioyce in the Lord, the reuenger of ſinnes. Theſe two things, the knowledge of ſinne, and the vengeance of God prepared for ſinnes are in the hart of the vnbeleeuer, which hart as it is vnbeleeuing, ſo hath it no hope of pardon, and therefore what other thing can theſe thinges worke in it, but cauſe it to be troubled, caſt downe and alwayes fearefull, and greatly terrified, and to thinke that ꝑ vengeance of God doth euery moment hang ouer it, that ſo that may be verified which Salomon ſayth: The vngodly fleeth when no man purſueth him. And that which is ſayd Deut. 28. The Lord ſhall giue thee a fearefull hart, and thy life ſhall hang in dout before thee. If a man will much perſwade ſuch a hart, to haue ioy in the Lord, he ſhall doe euen as if he perſwaded the water that it ſhould burne like vnto the fire, for it can taſt none of this ioy, it alwayes feeleth in conſcience, that the reuenging hande of God, is heauie vpon it. Whereupon the Prophet ſayth Pſal. 32. Be glad O ye righteous, and reioyce in the Lorde: and be ioyfull all ye that are true of hart: for this ioy in the Lorde can not be but in the righteous and them that are vpright in hart. And therefore it is manifeſt that this part of Scripture was writtē not for ſinners, but to the righteous & Saincts. Sinners muſt firſt be ſhewed, how they may be deliuered from ſinnes, and may obtaine God to be fauourable vnto them, which when they haue learned and ſo obtained, it followeth that they do of their owne accord reioyce in the Lorde, being deliuered from remorſe of conſcience. *Pro. 28. 1.*

But if any demaund, how one may be deliuered from remorſe of conſcience, and haue God merciſull vnto him, that is declared before at large, and ſhall hereafter be copiouſly ſpoken of. He which ſeeketh to haue a free and glad conſcience, and God gentle and fauourable, let him not begin at his owne workes, as the deceitfull Papiſts teach, onely tormenting conſciences, and increaſing the wrath of God, but let him deſpaire of himſelfe and of all his owne workes, let him embrace God in Chriſt, hauing a ſure *How a man may be deliuered from remorſe of conſcience. and be aſſured of Gods fauour.*

faith in the Gospell, that he shall receiue whatsoeuer it promiseth. But the Gospell promiseth that Christ is giuen to vs, that he may take away our sinnes, and be our high Priest, Mediatour and Aduocate before God, that so we may nothing dout, but that our sinnes through Christ only and his workes are forgiuen vs, and that we are reconciled to God, and that by this meanes our conscience is deliuered and comforted.

The beleeuing hart reioyceth in the Lord.

When such a faith possesseth the hart, and the Gospel is so receiued in deede, then God appeareth sweete & altogither louing, neither feeleth the hart any thing but the fauour & grace of God, it standeth with a stronge and bold confidence, it feareth not lest any euill come vnto it, it being quiet from all feare of vengeance and displeasure, is merrie, and glad of so incomparable grace and goodnes of God giuen vnto it freely and most abundantly in Christ. Wherefore there must needes forthwith proceede from such a faith, loue, ioy, peace, gladnes, giuing of thankes, prayse, & a certaine meruelous delight in God, as in a most deare & fauourable father, which dealeth so fatherly with vs, and poureth forth his giftes so plētifully and in so great a measure, vpon them that doe not deserue them. Behold of such ioy Paule speaketh here, which truelie where it is, there can be no place for sinne, or feare of death or hell, yea nothing is there but a ioyfull, quiet and omnipotent trust in God and in his fauour. Wherefore it is called ioy in the Lord, not in gold or siluer, gluttonie or drunkennes, in delicates or singing, health, knowledge, wisedom, power, glory, friendship, fauour, no nor in good workes, holines, or whatsoeuer is without God. Of these thou shalt take but a deceitfull and

Vaine ioy

vaine ioy, which can not pearse the hart, or enter vnto the bottom thereof, whereof thou mayst rightly say that which is wont to be spoken as a prouerbe amonge the Germaines: This man reioyceth, but he feeleth not any ioy in his hart. There is one ful & perfect ioy, which the beleeuers take of & in the Lord, which is nothing els, then to commit them selues vnto him, and of him alone to reioyce, trust and presume, as a most fauourable and louing father. Whatsoeuer ioy is not after this sort, the Lord doth contemne and reiect it, whereof Jeremie speaketh chap. 9. Let not the wise man reioyce in his wisedom, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches: but whoso will reioyce, let him reioyce in this, that he vnderstandeth and know-

eth

eth me. And Paule 2. Cor. 13. sayth: Let him that reioyceth reioyce in the Lord,

He addeth, that we must reioyce alwayes, where he toucheth them, which onely halfe the time doe reioyce in the Lorde, and praise him that is, when all thinges fall out accoyding to their desire but when aduersitie commeth, they chaunge ioy with sadnes and sorow, of whom the 48. Psalme speaketh: So long as thou doest well vnto him he will speake good of thee. But the Prophet him selfe sayth not so: I will alwaye blesse God his prayse shall euer be in my mouth. Psal 34. And he hath a iust cause so to doe, for who shall hurt him, vnto whom God is mercifull, surely sinne shall no thurt him, neither death or hel, wherefore the Prophet sayth in an other place: Yea though I walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no euill. Psal 23. And Paule sayth Rom. 8: Who shall separate vs from the loue of Christ? shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakednes, or peril, or sword? I am perswaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor thinges present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shal be able to separate vs from the loue of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.

We must alwayes reioyce in the Lord.

Againe I say reioyce. This repetition of ỳ Apostle confirmeth his exhortation, and truely not without a cause, forasmuch as we liue in the middes of sinnes, and therefore in the middes of tribulations, both which do moue vs vnto sadnes & heauines. Wherefore the Apostle purposing to comfort vs against these, exhorteth vs that we should alwayes reioyce in ỳ Lord, albeit we sometime fall into sinnes. For it is meete, the more God with his goodnes exceedeth the euill of sinne: so much more alwayes to reioyce in him, when we are sorowfull because of our sinnes, which albeit by nature they bring sadnes and sorow with them, yet forasmuch as they can not bringe so much hurt, as Christ, if we beleeue in him bringeth profit and safetie, ioy in the Lord ought alwayes to haue the first place with vs, and farre to ouercome the sorow and sadnes ỳ commeth by reason of our sinnes. For we must alwayes thinke on that which John writeth: If any man sinne, we haue an Aduocate with the Father Iesus Christ the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our sinnes. 1. Joh. 2.

Though the faithfull sometime fal into sinne, yet they must not therefore ceasse to reioyce in the Lorde.

Let your patient minde be knowne vnto all men. He hath

already taught, howe men ought to behaue them selues toward God, namely that they must serue him with a cheerfull heart and continuall ioy: now he declareth in few wordes, how the beleeuers ought to behaue them selues toward men, saying: Let your patient mind be knowne vnto all men. Which wordes are thus much in effect: Be ioyfull toward God, alwaies reioycing in & of him, but toward men be of a patiēt mind, & pliant applying your selues to all, & so behauing your selues, that ye be ready to do & suffer all things, & to yeeld in euery thing, as much as may be by any meanes without transgressing the commaundement of God, whereby ye may approue your selues to all men, and please all in that which is good: not onely hurting none, but also taking in good worth al things of al men, interpreting aright the sayings of al men, & accepting them in ỹ better part, that mē may plainly see you to be them, vnto whom all things are alike, which take in good part whatsoeuer betideth you, which sticke in nothing, which would not disagree with any man for any cause, which be rich wᵗ the rich, poore with the poore, reioycing with them that reioyce, weeping with thē ỹ weepe, & to be briefe, which be made all things to al men, that al mē must needes acknowledge that ye are grieuous to none, but agreable, of a patient mind, pliant, and obedient toward all in all thinges. The Greeke worde epieices which the Apostle here vseth, meaneth the same, which signifieth in our tongue a patient and pliant mind, whereby one doth so apply and shew him selfe indifferent to others, that he is the same to one that he is to an other, applying him selfe indifferently to the will of all, not requiring him selfe to be counted for a rule, whereunto the rest ought to apply and order them selues.

What it is to let our patient mind be knowne vnto all men.

An old interpreter translateth it modestie, which, if thou vnderstand it aright, and not for the only moderation and temperācie of meate and apparell, as it is wont commonly to be taken, is not altogither vnfitly translated, namely, if thou vnderstand it to be a vertue, wherby one thinking modestly of him selfe, endeoureth to order and apply himselfe vnto all, according to the capacitie and abilitie of euery one, ready to permit, to take in good part to obey, to giue place, to doe, to omit, to suffer all thinges, as he shall see it will profit his neighbour, albeit he must suffer hinderance and losse of his substaunce, name, and body thereby. That these thinges may be made more playne, it shall be

good to declare them by examples. Paule. 1. Cor. 9. writeth thus of himselfe: Vnto the Iewes I become as a Iew, that I may winne the Iewes: to them that are vnder the lawe, as though I were vnder the lawe: to them that are without lawe, as though I were without lawe (when I am not without lawe as pertaining to God, but am in the lawe through Christ) I am made all thinges to all men, that I might by all meanes saue some. Behold, thou seest here the patient & pliant minde rightly obseruing those thinges which are here commaunded. For those things that he writeth of him selfe haue this meaning: Sometimes he did eate, drinke, and doe all thinges as a Iewe, albeit it was not necessarie that he should so doe: sometimes he did eate and drinke with the Gentiles, and did all thinges as free from the lawe. For onely faith in God, and loue toward our neighbour, are necessarily required, all other thinges are free, so that we may freely obserue them for one mans sake, and omit them for an other mans sake, as we shall perceiue it to be profitable to euery one. An example of a patient minde in Paule.

Now it is contrary to this modestie or meekenes, if one hauing an impatient mind, trusteth to his owne wit, and contendeth that one thing among ỹ rest is necessarie, which thou must either omit or obserue, and so applying him selfe vnto none, but contending to haue all other to apply them selues vnto him, he neglecteth & peruerteth the softnes & meekenes which is here taught, yea & the libertie of faith also: such some of the Iewes were, vnto whom we must giue no place, euen as Paule yeelded not vnto them. We see the same example commonly in Christ, but specially Matth. 12. & Mar. 2. where we reade that he suffered his Disciples to breake the Sabboth, & he him selfe also, when the case so required, did breake it, when it was otherwise, he did keepe it, whereof he gaue this reason: The Sonne of man is Lord euen of the Sabboth. Which is as much to say as: the Sabboth is free, that thou mayst breake it for one mans sake and commoditie, and for the sake and commoditie of an other thou mayst keepe it. So Paule caused Timothe to be circumcised because of the Iewes, for that they thought that it was of importance to their saluation: againe he would not haue Titus circumcised, because certain Iewes did vniustly vrge it, so that ỹ circumcision of Titus would haue ben rather a confirmation of errour vnto them, then haue profited them any thing. Paule therefore would keepe circumci- An impatient minde what it doth.

sion free, that he might sometime vse it, and sometime not vse it, as he should perceiue it to be commodious and profitable to euerie one.

How the ordinaunces & decrees of men must be obserued or not obserued

So, to come to other matters, when the Pope commaundeth to make confession, to fast, to abstaine frō, or vse this or that kind of meate &c: and exacteth these thinges as necessarie to saluation, they are vtterly to be contemned, and those thinges that are contrary to these, are most freely to be done: but if he should not commaund them as necessarie, if any man might be holpen or edified in any thing by the obseruation of them, surely they were to be obserued, but freely, and of loue onely, as also they are to be omitted, if the omitting of them may be profitable to any. The reason of this libertie is this: The Sonne of man is Lord of the Sabboth: if of the Sabboth, howe much more of the traditions of men? Whatsoeuer thou shalt obserue vpon this libertie, it can not hurt any, but to obserue them of necessitie, it extinguisheth faith and the Gospell. Likewise, if one liue as yet in a Monasterie, if he obserue the vowes and ordinaunces of that life vpon Christian libertie, and of loue to his brethren that he may edifie them, and of no necessitie, neither with the hinderaunce of his owne or other mens saluation, he shall doe godly, for he is free: but if those thinges be straitly required as necessary to saluation, then before thou suffer thy selfe to be brought into this errour, Monasteries, shauinges, hoods, vowes, rules, ordinaunces, and all such like must be left, and the contrarie must be done, to witnes, that onely faith and loue are necessarie for a Christian, and that all other thinges are free, so that he may either omit or doe them for the edifying and cause of them with whom he liueth. Whatsoeuer thou shalt obserue vpon libertie and of loue, is godly: but if thou obserue any thing of necessitie, it is vngodly. The same is to be sayd of all other ordinaunces and decrees of men, which are wont to be obserued in Monasteries, that whatsoeuer doth not disagree with the worde of God, thou mayst being free eyther obserue or omit it, according as thou shalt knowe it to be profitable and acceptable to them, with whom thou art conuersant: but if they be required as necessary, reiect them all vtterly, and tread them vnder thy feete.

Hereupon thou now seest, what a deuilish thing the Papacie & Monasteries be. For whatsoeuer things be free & to be permitted

to free loue onely, they make them necessary, and lay the keeping of them is of importance to saluation, whereby truely as much as is in them, they togither peruert and extinguish the Gospell and faith. I passe ouer with silence, that they hereupon set and sell the care of the belly in steede of the seruice of God. For how many among them at this day do for Gods cause, & not rather for the bellies sake, take vpon them to be Monkes or Clerkes, do frequent the quier, sing, pray, say Masse, or doe any such thinge, wherein they counterfait and corrupt the true worship & seruice of God? The common subuersion of all Monasteries were the best reformation of all these thinges, from which so much discommoditie and no whit of profit may be looked for. Before our Monasterie could be perswaded concerning true Christian libertie, infinite thousands of soules in others should perish, wherefore forasmuch as they bring no commoditie at all, neither is there any neede of them, and they are cause of greater hinderance to a Christian cōmon weale, then can be thought, and can not by any meanes be reformed, what can be more profitable, then that they be vtterly ouerthrowne and abolished?

Christian liberty turned of the Papists into meere necessitie.

Moreouer that we may admonish here concerning the ciuill Magistrate, when he commaundeth or requireth any thing, yea if he compel thereunto we must obey, for there commeth no losse of Christian libertie or of faith hereby, forasmuch as they doe not contend that those thinges are necessarie to saluation which they doe ordaine or require, but onely to maintaine outward rule, publike tranquilitie and gouernement, & so the conscience remaineth free. Wherefore, forasmuch as it doth nothing hinder faith to do those things which the ciuil Magistrate commaundeth, but doth also profit the common weale, it shall be without doubt a point of Christian obedience to endeuour to do them with a willing mind, that we may be such as are pliant & agreable to all men, willing to doe all things, ready to deserue well of euery one, & to gratifie all. Howbeit if any should contend that those commaundements of the ciuill Magistrate be necessarie to saluation, then, as it is sayd of the traditions of the Papistes, the contrary rather were to be done, or at the lest it were to be witnessed, that thou doest them onely for the common weales sake, because so it is profitable to others, and not that thou mayst obtaine saluation by them, which we haue gotten by Christ Iesus alone, as many of vs as

Obedience to the ciuill Magistrate doth not hinder Christian libertie.

beleeue in him. According to this doctrine & the examples before mentioned euery one ought to behaue him selfe in euery thing & toward all men, as Paule here teacheth, that he sticke not to his owne iudgement or right, but that he shew him selfe pliant vnto others, and haue regard of those thinges, which he shall knowe will be acceptable and profitable to his neighbours.

When therfore it doth nothing hinder thy faith, and profiteth thy neighbour to yeeld somewhat of thine owne right, if thou doe it not, thou art without charitie, & neglectest that Christian softnes & patient mind that Paule here speaketh of. Yea if thou hast regard herof, as he that truely beleeueth in Christ ought to haue, thou must take it patiently euen when any man doth iniurie vnto thee, or endamage thee, and so interprete it in the better part, and alwayes think on that which that Martyr when all his substance was taken from him, sayd: But they shall not take away Christ from me. So whatsoeuer chaunceth vnto thee, say thou: I haue as yet suffered no losse of my faith, why shoulde I not take it in good parte, which my neigbour hath done? why should I not yeeld vnto him, and apply my selfe to his will? Thou canst scarce find a more manifest example hereof, then betwene two vnfeyned friendes: for as they behaue them selues one toward an other, so ought a Christian to behaue him selfe toward euery one. Either of them endeuoureth to gratify other, either of them giueth place to other, suffereth, doth, and omitteth whatsoeuer he seeth to be for the profite and commoditie of the other, & that freely without all constraint. Either of them doth diligently apply him selfe to the wil of the other, neither of them compelleth other to follow his mind, & if one should vse the goods of an other, ỹ other would not be offended, but would take it in good part, & would not grudg rather to giue more, and that I may speake briefly, betweene such there is no exaction of law, no grudging, no constraint, no necessitie, but libertie, fauour and good will.

A most worthy saying of a right Christian Martyr.

An example which Christians ought to follow in behauing them selues toward their neighboures

Contrariwise, such as be impatient and obstinate, which take nothing in good part of any man, but go about to make al things subiect to their owne will, and to order all thinges according to their owne iudgement, such I say trouble the world, and are the cause of all discordes, contentions, warres, & whatsoeuer discommoditie there is, they say afterward, that they did those thinges for the loue of iustice, and for that they endeuoured to defend that which

The impatient & obstinate are cause of much euill.

which is right. So that that heathen man sayd not amisse: Extreme rigour is extreme iniurie. And Salomon also sayth Eccles.7. Be thou neither too righteous nor ouer wise. For as extreme rigour is extreme iniurie, so too great wisedom is extreme folly. Which also is meant by this common saying: when wise men dote they dote beyond measure. Surely if God should deale with vs according to right, we should perish in a moment, wherefore as Paule prayseth in him this moderation of right, and incomparable patience and gentlenes saying 2.Cor.10. I beseech you by the meekenes and gentlenes of Christ, so is it also meete that we doe obserue a measure of our iudgement, right, wisedom, prudence, and in all thinges apply our selues to the profit & commoditie of others.

But let vs weie the wordes of the Apostle, for they are placed not without a spirituall skilfulnes, he sayth: Let your patient minde or softnes be knowne vnto all men. Where thou must not thinke that he commaundeth thee to be made knowne vnto all men, or that thou oughtest to tell thy patient mind or softnes before all men. For he sayth not, tell it forth, but let it be knowne, that is, endeuour to practize it toward men. I doe not commaund that ye shoulde thinke or speake of it, but that ye labour that it may be knowne in deede, while all men doe trie and feele it, that no man may say any other thing of you, then that ye be of a patient minde, and pliant, applying your selues to all men, being enforced so to say euen by manifest experience. So that if any man were neuer so much bent to speake otherwise of you, his mouth might be stopped by ỹ testimonie of all other, witnessing of your patient mind and meekenes. So sayth Christ Matth.5. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen. And Peter sayth: 1.Pet.2. Haue your conuersation honest among the Gentiles, that they which speake euill of you as of euill doers, may by your good workes, which they shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation. It is not surely in our power, that our patient mind should be knowne and acknowledged of all men, but it shall be sufficient for vs, if we endeuour that all men may haue triall thereof in vs, and that no man may finde it wanting in our life.

How our patient minde must be made knowē vnto all men.

Moreouer [all men] is not so to be taken, that thou shouldest vnderstand thereby all men which are in the world, but rather all

sortes of men, that we haue regard to be of a patient mind as wel toward enemies as friendes, as well toward seruaunts as Maisters, small as great, poore as rich, straungers as them at home, toward them that we know not, as toward them with whom we are familiar. For there are some, which behaue them selues very gentlely and patiently toward straungers, but toward them that are in the house with them, or with whome they alwayes keepe companie, there are none more obstinate or froward then they. And how many are there, which at great and rich mens handes take all things in good part, interpreting euery thing at the best, and most gently beare, whatsoeuer they say or doe, but toward the poore and abiects they shewe no gentlenes or meekenes, neither take any thing of them in good part. So we are all ready to doe for our children, parents, friends, & kinsmen, and most fauourably interprete and willingly beare whatsoeuer they haue committed. Howe often doe we euen praise the manifest vices of our friend, or at the least winke at them and apply our selues most fitly vnto them? but to our enemies & aduersaries we impart none of this fauour, in them we can find nothing that is good, nothing that is to be borne, nothing that can be interpreted in the better part, but we dispraise euery thing, & take it at the worst. Against such parted and vnperfect patient mindes Paule here speaketh saying: Let your patient mind be knowne vnto all men: he will haue our patient mind and right Christian meekenes to be perfect and entire toward all, whether they be enemies or friendes, he will haue vs suffer and take in good part all things of all men, whithout al respect either of persons or deserts. And such without dout will our patient mind be, if it be true and not counterfet: no otherwise then gold remaineth gold, whether a godly or vngodly man possesse it, and the siluer, which Judas, who betrayed the Lorde, had, was not turned into ashes, but remayned that which it was, as truely all the good creatures of God, whosoeuer haue them, doe continue toward all thinges, that which they are: So a patient mind which is syncere, comming of the spirit, continueth like it selfe, whether it light vpon enemies or friendes, poore men or rich. But our nature which is full of deceit & plainly corrupt, doth so behaue it selfe, as if that which is gold in the hande of Peter, were turned into a cole in the hand of Judas, and it is wont to be patient and plyant toward riche men, great per-

The most part are ready to make their patient mind known to the rich and their friendes, but not to the poore and their enemies.

sona,

ſonages, ſtraungers friendes, and not toward euerie one, where-fore it is falſe, vaine, lying, hypocriticall, and nothing but deceit and mockerie before God. Hereof now learne how vnpoſſible ſound, and entire, that is, ſpirituall meekenes and a patient minde is vnto nature, and how few there be which marke this euill, by reaſon of that deceitfull meekenes and patient minde, though in outward ſhew very goodly, which they ſhew vnto certaine, thinking that they do well and iuſtly, in that they are more hard and impatient toward ſome. For ſo their defiled and filthie nature teacheth them, by her goodly reaſon, which alwayes iudgeth, and doeth againſt the ſpirit and thoſe thinges that are of the ſpirit, becauſe as Paul ſayth: Rom. 8. They that are after the fleſh, ſauour the thinges of the fleſh.

But to conclude, it is manifeſt that the Apoſtle hath comprehended in theſe few wordes the whole life worthy of a Chriſtian, which he ought to leade toward his neighbour. For he that is of a patient minde, pliant and meeke in deede, ſtudieth to deſerue well of all men, as well concerning the body as concerning the ſoule, as well in deede as in wordes, and doth alſo beare with a moſt patient minde, the offences and malice of others. Where ſuch a minde is, there is alſo loue, ioye, peace, long ſuffering, gentlenes, goodnes, & what ſoeuer is the frute of the ſpirit. Gal. 5. But here fleſh murmureth: If we ſhould endeuour to be ſo meeke and patient, ſaith the fleſh, that we ſhould take all thinges in good part of all men, it would come to paſſe, that no mā ſhould be able to keepe a peece of bread ſafely & in peace for the vniuſt which would abuſe our meekenes & patiēt mind, they would take away all things, yea they would not ſuffer vs to liue. Marke how comfortably & aboundātly the Apoſtle doth ſatiſfie this diſtruſting & fooliſh cogitation, euen from this place vnto the ende of this text.

The Lord is at hand. As though he ſaid: if there were no Lord or no God, one might feare, when by his meekenes and patient minde he compteth all thinges alike, and taketh all thinges in good part, that that would be damage and hurt vnto him, but now there not onely is a Lord, which gouerneth all thinges moſt iuſtly, but he is alſo at hand, he can not forget or forſake thee, be thou onely of a patient minde and gentle toward all, let him haue the care of thee, nouriſh, and preſerue thee. He hath giuen Chriſt the eternall good, how ſhould not he alſo giue thinges neceſſarie

We muſt make our patient minde knowne vnto all without feare leſt any abuſe it to our hurt & hindrance.

for the belly? He hath farre more, then can be taken away from thee, and thou forasmuch as thou hast Christ, hast much more then the whole world. Hereunto pertaineth that which is sayde Psal. 55. Cast thy burden vpon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee. And 1. Pet. 5. Cast all your care on him for he careth for you. And Christ sayth Matth. 6. Behold the foules of the ayer and lillies of the field, &c. all which agree with the present consolation of the Apostle, and haue the same meaning which these wordes here haue: The Lord is at hand.

Christians must not be carefull, but must cast their care on God who careth for them.

Be nothing carefull. That is, take no care at all for your selues, let God care for you, who knoweth and is able to do it, whom ye haue now knowne that he is good and gracious. The heathen haue not without a cause care of this present life, inasmuch as they are ignorant and doe not beleeue that they haue a God who hath care of all, as Christ Matth. 6. said: Be not carefull for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drinke: nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: for after all these things seeke the Gentiles, but your heauenly Father knoweth, that ye haue neede of all these thinges. Wherefore let the whole world take from thee, and do thee iniurie, thou shalt alwayes haue sufficient, and it can not be that thou shouldest perish with any aduersitie, vnles they haue first taken from thee thy God, but who can take him from thee, if thou thy selfe dost not cast him of? There is no cause therefore that we should be careful, seeing that he is our father and prouideth for vs, which hath all thinges in his own hand, euen those, which seeme to take away those things that be ours from vs, and to endamage and hurt vs wherein soeuer they are able. But we haue exceeding great cause alwayes to reioyce in the Lorde, when we are of a patient minde toward all men, forasmuch as we are certaine, if so be that we beleeue, that it can by no meanes come to passe, that good thinges should be wanting vnto vs, hauing Almightie God our fauourable and carefull father: whom they that haue not, let vs suffer them to be troubled with carke and care. It ought to be our onely care, how we may be voyde of care, and be found alwayes ioyfull in God, and meeke and of a patient mynde toward men. So without doubt we shall trie that which Dauid tried saying: I haue been yonge & now am olde, and yet saw I neuer the righteous forsaken, nor his seede begging their bread. And that which

Psal. 37. 25.

he

he sayth Psal. 40: The Lord careth for me.

But in all thinges let your requestes be shewed vnto God in prayer & supplication with giuing of thankes. In these wordes the Apostle teacheth, how our care is to be cast vpon God, and the meaning of that which he sayth is this: Onely be not carefull, but if any thing chaunce, which may make you carefull (as in deede innumerable such are wont to come vnto those that liue in the world) so behaue your selues, that ye attempt nothing at all with your care, what soeuer that shalbe which chaunceth vnto you, but casting of care, turne your selues with prayer and supplication vnto God, and desire him that he will bring to passe and finish that which your selues otherwise should in vaine haue attempted with your care to accomplish. Howbeit desire this with giuing of thankes, forasmuch as ye haue such a God as hath care of you, and vnto whom ye may safely commit all carke and care for you. But he that will not so behaue himselfe when any thing happeneth, but will first weye all thinges by his owne reason, and order them according to his owne iudgement, and so take to himselfe the care of his thinges, he shall wraphimselfe in innumerable discommodities, he shall loze all ioy and quietnes thereby, and yet shall preuaile nothing, but labour in vaine, & plunge himselfe so much more in troubles and miseries, that he shall not be able to escape out of them againe, which we learne daily both by our owne and by other mens experience. Now that which Paule here admonisheth concerning prayer tendeth vnto this end, lest that any man should neglect all thinges & commit them to God, and he himselfe sleepe and doe nothing all, no not so much as once pray for them: for he that should vse this slouthfulnes, albeit he were now quiet, shall easily be wrapped in cares, wherof he shall not be able to ridde him selfe: we must doe our endeuour and not sleepe, and therefore it is that many thinges be incident, which are wont to bring carefulnes, whereby we might be as it were compelled to pray vnto God. Wherefore Paule hath not in vaine ioyned togither those two: Be nothing carefull. and: In all thinges let your requestes de shewed vnto God in prayer and supplication with giuing of thankes. Nothing and All do in deede greatly differ, howbeit the Apostle therefore put them togither, that he might signifie that it can not be, but that many and innumerable things be incident, which are wont to

How ỹ godly must cast their care vpon God.

bring carke and care, but that in all them we ought to admit no carefulnes, but alwayes flie vnto prayer, and commit them all vnto God, & deſire of him thoſe thinges whereof we haue neede.

Now we muſt here ſee how our prayer muſt be framed, and what is the true maner of praying. The Apoſtle ſetteth downe foure thinges, prayer, ſupplication, giuing of thankes, and requeſts or petitions. Prayer is thoſe wordes or ſpeache, wherein as ſometimes ſome thing is deſired, ſo alſo other thinges are declared, as is the Lords Prayer and the Pſalmes. Supplication is, when the petition is vrged or made more earneſt by ſome thing, as when one prayeth for his father, or for ſome other thinge which is deare and excellent vnto him, as when we praye vnto God by his mercy, by his ſonne, by his promiſe, by his name, &c. As Salomon Pſal. 132. Lord remember Dauid, and all his trouble. And Paule Rom. 12. I beſeech you by the mercies of God. And 2. Cor. 10. I beſeech you by the meekenes and gentlenes of Chriſt, &c. A petition or requeſt is, when we name that which is deſired, and for which prayer and ſupplication is made, as in the Lordes Prayer, all that compoſition of wordes is called prayer, but thoſe ſeuen thinges for which we pray, as halowed be thy name, thy kingdome come, &c. are petitions. According to that ſaying Matth. 7. Aske, and it ſhalbe giuen you: ſeeke, and ye ſhall fynde: knocke, and it ſhall be opened vnto you. For whoſoeuer asketh, receiueth: and he that ſeeketh fyndeth: and to him that knocketh, it ſhalbe opened. Giuing of thankes is when the benefites of God are rehearſed, whereby faith in God is ſtrengthened, and ſtirred vp ſo much more confidently to looke for that which is deſired, & for which we do praie. Wherefore prayer vrgeth or earneſtly aſketh by ſupplication, but is ſtrengthened and made ſweete & acceptable by giuing of thankes, and ſo by this ſtrength and ſweetnes it preuaileth, and obtaineth, whatſoeuer it aſketh. This maner of prayer we read to haue bin vſed in the Church, and among the holy fathers of the old Teſtament, which were wont alwayes in their prayers to aſke with ſupplication and giuing of thankes. The ſame alſo we ſee in the Lordes Prayer, which beginneth with giuing of thankes and with prayſe, when as euen in the beginning thereof we confeſſe God a father, vnto whom the godly minde hath acceſſe by his fatherly loue and by the loue of his ſonne, vnto which

Prayer.

Supplication

A petition or requeſt.

Giuing of thankes.

ſupplication nothing may be compared, wherefore it is both the beſt and moſt excellent prayer of all which may be had.

Moreouer in theſe wordes Paule hath verie well expreſſed the myſterie of the golden cenſer in the old Teſtament, whereof we read many thinges in the bookes of Moſes. It was lawfull for the Prieſtes only to burne incenſe, now all we which beleeue in Chriſt, are Prieſtes, wherefore it is lawfull for all vs, and for vs onely to burne the incenſe of prayers. The cenſer that golden veſſell, is the wordes which we vtter in prayer, ſurely golden and precious, as thoſe are, whereof the Lordes prayer conſiſteth, the Pſalmes and other prayers of the Scripture. For commonly in the Scripture veſſels ſignifie wordes, for that our meaninges are contained in wordes as in of a veſſell, and by wordes are vttered and receiued as out of a veſſell, as wine, water, burning coles, and ſuch like, are contained in veſſels, and taken out of veſſels. So by the cuppe of Babylon Apoc. 17. the doctrine of men is vnderſtood, and by the cuppe wherein the blood of Chriſt is dronke the Goſpell. The myſterie of the golden cenſer declared.

Furthermore burning coles, whereupon the frankincenſe was layde, ſignifie giuing of thankes, and rehearſing of benefites in prayer, which we are wont to do in making ſupplication. For, that by fierie coles benefites are ſignified it is manifeſt euen out of the. 12. to the Rom. where the Apoſtle reciteth the ſaying of Salomon Prouerb. 25. If thine enemie hunger, feede him: if he thirſt, giue him drinke: for in ſo doing, thou ſhalt heape coles of fire on his head. And benifites may be rightly called coles of fire, foraſmuch as they inflame the hart with loue, although it be cold. In the Lawe it was prohibited to lay the frankincenſe vpon any other coles, but them that were of ỹ alter of the Lord, which ſignifieth, that we muſt not rehearſe our owne good deedes in prayer, as that Phariſe did Luc. 15. but onely the benefites of God beſtowed vpon vs in Chriſt. He is our alter, by him we muſt offer, for the benefites receiued by him we muſt giue thãkes, and make mention of them in prayer for the increaſing of our faith. This Paule teacheth Coloſſ. 3. where he ſayth: Doe all thinges in the name of the Lord Ieſus, giuing thankes to God the Father by him. For God can not ſuffer, that thou ſhouldeſt glorie in any thing els in his ſight, which he declared in a type or figure Leuit. 10. where we read that Nadab and Abihu the What is ſignified by the burning coles, wherevpon the incẽſe was layde.

We muſt giue thankes to God by Chriſt.

sonnes of Aaron were taken and consumed of the flame from the alter of God, because they burned incense taking other fire then of the alter of the Lord. The workes of Christ onely are acceptable to God, wherefore for these onely we must both giue thankes and reioyce in prayer.

The petitiõs made in prayer signified by the icense layde on the burning coles.

The incense signifieth the petitions made in prayer. For petitions are, whereof prayer consisteth, and which ascende vnto God, according as Paule sayth: Let your petitions be shewed vnto God, wherein he seemeth to haue considered and interpreted them as a sauour ascending from the censer. As though he had sayd: when ye will burne incense sweete and acceptable vnto the Lord, make, that your petitions be shewed vnto God with supplication and giuing of thankes, this incense and this sauour as it is most sweete vnto God, so doth it ascend straight vnto heauen, like vapoures of smoke, and entreth euen vnto the throne of God. And as burning coles doe giue a strong sauour and make it ascende vpward: so the memorie of the benefites of God, which we rehearse by giuing of thankes, and whereof we doe as it were aduertize God and our selues doth, make prayer stedfast and bold, which cheerefully and gladly ascendeth into heauen, without which truely prayer fainteth, is cold and of no force. Wherefore whosoeuer thou art, before thou pray with faith and effectually, thy hart must be inflamed with the memorie of the benefites, which God hath bestowed vpon vs in Christ.

But perhaps some man will demaund, how our petitions be shewed or become manifest vnto God, seeing that they be not onely knowne vnto him before we pray, but he also doth sende vs that, which we aske? Whereunto I aunswere: the Apostle adioyned this, that he might teach, of what sort true prayer ought to be, to wit, assured and hauing confidence and trust in God, which passeth not away into the winde, neither is made at aduenture, as their prayer is, which pray, and haue no regarde, whether God heare or not, yea rather beleeue that he doth not heare, which vndoubtedly is not to pray or to aske of God, but to tempt and mocke God. For if any man did desire money of me, whom I certainely knew, not to perswade himselfe that he should receiue it, I could not suffer such an asker, of whom I might assure my selfe to be mocked: how much more is God offended of our much crying out and babbling, when we do continually

We must not pray at aduenture, but be certainly perswaded that we shalbe heard of God.

nually babble much & crye out, and do not thinke at al whether he heareth vs. Learne therefore here, that thy petitions must be shewed vnto God that is, that thou must so aske, that thou dout not, that thy petitions be knowne and accepted of God, and beleeue certainly that thou shalt obtaine whatsoeuer thou dost aske, with which faith if thou be endued, it shall so come vnto thee in deede. For as we beleeue, so it commeth vnto vs. Wherefore, as the smoke carieth the sauour vpward from the censer: so faith carieth the petitions of the beleeuers into the sight of God, whereby we assuredly beleeue, that our petitions shall come vnto God, and that we shall vndoutedly obtaine those thinges that we ask. Paule by these wordes [be shewed] did vndoutedly meane that, which is eftsoones in the Psalmes: God hath heard my petition, Giue eare Lord vnto my prayer, and such like. Hereof Christ speaketh Matth. 21. and Mar. 11. Whatsoeuer ye shall aske in prayer, if ye beleue, ye shall receiue it. And James sayth chap. 1. Aske in faith and wauer not, for he that wauereth shall receiue nothing of the Lord. Who may not now herof perceiue, that that much babling and crying out, which is made commonly through the world in monasteries, is a moking and deluding of God? The prayers of these, if they may be called prayers, are aboundantly shewed before men, for they crie out and babble too much, but there is no regard of them with God, they are not knowne of him, neither come they vnto his eares, that is, he doth by no meanes heare them, for that they do not beleeue, or are assured, that their crying out or much babbling is heard of God, wherefore as they beleeue, so do they receiue. It was time therefore long since, that those mockinges and blasphemies of God should be abolished. But if we praye as we are here taught, there shalbe nothing surely which we may not obtaine. Now we praye for many things continually, and receiue nothing, neither is it any meruell, seeing we praye so, that our petitions be not shewed vnto God, for that we do not beleeue that they be manifest vnto him. Wo to our diffidence and incredulitie.

How our petitions are shewed vnto God.

Why we oftetimes pray and receiue not.

And the peace of God which passeth all vnderstanding, shal preserue your harts and myndes in Christ Iesus. In how goodly an order doth Paule here instruct a Christian man? First he teacheth him to be glad and ioyfull in the Lord by faith: secondly to shew himselfe meeke and gentle to all his neighbours. And if

thou say, how can I do that without losse or hinderance? he answereth The Lord is at hand. If thou againe obiect: But what if men persecute me, and euen bereue of that I haue? He addeth: be nothing carefull, but let thy petitions be shewed vnto God. Where if the flesh againe murmur, what if in the meane season I be oppressed and spoiled? he concludeth that there shall be nothing lesse, the peace of God shall preserue and keepe thee, whereof I must now entreat somewhat. By the peace of God is not meant here that peace, whereby God is peaceable and quiet in himselfe, but that which he giueth vnto vs, and poureth into our heartes, euen as also it is called the word of God which he giueth vs, that we may preache it and beleeue it. So when he giueth this peace vnto vs, it is called the peace of God, euen because we haue the same with him, when in the world notwithstanding we suffer affliction.

The peace of God.

Now this peace passeth all vnderstanding, reason, and knowledge of man: which is not so to be vnderstood, as though man can not at all perceiue or know it, for if we haue peace with God, truely it must be felt in our heart and conscience, otherwise our heartes and myndes could not be preserued by it, but it is thus to be vnderstood: When tribulation commeth vpon them, which know not to flie vnto God with prayer and supplication, but trust to their owne wisedome and care, whereby they seeke peace, but that which reason is able to know, which is that, whereby tribulation taketh an ende, and is chaunged with outward tranquillitie: this peace doth not passe reason, but is agreeable vnto it, inasmuch as it is sought and found out of it. Wherefore they that are voyd of faith are exceedingly disquieted, and troubled vntill according to the reason of the flesh they obtaine this peace by hardly deliuering or ridding themselues of aduersitie, not regarding whether they bring that to passe by force or by craft, as he that hath receiued a wound seeketh to haue it healed, &c. But they that reioyce syncerely in the Lord, it is sufficient for them, that they knowe that they haue God fauourable vnto them, and haue assured peace with him, they abyde willingly in tribulation, being nothing carefull for that peace of reason by the remouing of outward troubles, but they endure them valiantly, looking to be strengthned inwardly by faith, taking no care whether the aduersities which they suffer, shall remaine a

The peace which the faithfull enioy.

short

shoꝛt oꝛ a long time, whether they shalbe tempoꝛal oꝛ continuing, neither are disquieted with caring what ende they shall haue. They commit al things to God, seeking not to know, when, how, where, oꝛ by whom he wil giue them quietnes. Wheꝛefoꝛe God againe sheweth them this fauour, that he maketh the end of their triall to be such, and with so great commoditie, as no man could either suspect oꝛ wish foꝛ. Loe, this is that peace of the crosse, the peace of God, the peace of conscience, true Christian peace, which maketh that a man outwardly also, as much as is in him, liueth quietly and peaceably with al men, and troubleth no man. This peace, reason is not able by any meanes to knowe oꝛ comꝛehend, that a man vnder the crosse may haue quietnes of minde and ioy of hart, and peace euen in the veꝛy inuasion of his enemies: this is the gift and woꝛke of God, knowen to none, but to him that hath it, and hath tried it.

Whereas Paule sayd: Now the God of hope fill you with al ioy & peace in beleeuing, that which he calleth in these woꝛdes, peace in beleeuing, he calleth in our pꝛesent text ỹ peace of God. Moꝛeouer Paule signifieth in these woꝛdes, that whosoeuer wyl reioyce in the Loꝛd by faith, and be meeke and of a patient minde towarde all by loue, the Deuyll vndoubtedly is against him, and wil raise vp some crosse, that he may dꝛiue him from so Christian a purpose, wheꝛefoꝛe the Apostle will haue euery one to be pꝛepared against this assault of Satan, and to place his peace there where Satan can not trouble it, namely in God, and not thinke how he may cast of the crosse, but suffer the aduersarie to take on, and rage as he list, he in the meane season patiently looking foꝛ the Loꝛd, that he comming may make an ende of aduersitie and trouble: foꝛ by this meanes his minde, hart, and conscience are pꝛeserued and kept in peace. Neither can patience endure, where the hart is not confirmed with this peace, foꝛ that he onely which hath this peace doth throughly perswade himselfe that God is fauourable vnto him, and careful foꝛ him, and maketh no accompt what chaunceth vnto him from creatures. Moꝛeouer let no man vnderstande here the hartes and mindes to be the will and knowledge of nature, but as Paule himselfe interpꝛeteth, the hartes and mindes in Christ Iesu, that is, such as we haue in Christ, of Christ, and vnder Christ. These are the hartes and mindes which faith and loue cause, with which they that be endued, doe

Rom.15.13.

The Deuill laboureth to hinder and stay the godly proceedings of the faithfull.

behaue themselues most godly towards God, and most louingly and gently toward their neighbour. Toward God they so behaue themselues, that they beleeue in him, and loue him with their whole heart, and are also most ready, with their whole heart and with all their cogitacions to doe those thinges which shalbe acceptable to God and their neighbours, as much as, yea more then they are able. Such heartes and mindes the Deuell goeth about with the feare of death and other troubles to terrifie and driue from this godlines, erecting a false hope, there against by the deuises and imaginations of men, wherewith the minde is seduced, that it may seeke to be comforted and holpen of it selfe or other creatures, which if it doe, surely he hath drawne such a man from the care of God, and wrapped him in his owne vaine care.

Thus hast thou godly reader, out of this short text a most plentifull instruction of Christian life, howe thou must liue toward God and thy neighbour, namely that thou must beleue that God is all thinges vnto thee, and thou againe must be all thinges vnto thy neighbours, that thou must shew thy selfe such a one to thy neighbour as God hath shewed himselfe vnto thee that thou must receiue of God and giue to thy neighbour: All which are contained in faith and loue, the whole some of all Christianitie.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING THEM THAT BE VNDER THE Law, and them that be vnder Grace.

Gal. 4.

Verse 1. THen I saye, that the heire as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a seruaũt, though he be Lord of all,

2 But

2. But is vnder tutors and gouernours, vntill the time appointed of the father.
3. Euen ſo, we when we were children, were in bondage vnder the rudiments of the world.
4. But when the fulnes of time was come, God ſent forth his Sonne made of a woman, and made vnder the Lawe.
5. That he might redeeme them which were vnder the Lawe, that we might receiue the adoption of the ſonnes.
6. And becauſe ye are ſonnes, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Sonne into your hearts, which cryeth, Abba, Father.
7. Wherefore now thou art not a ſeruaunt, but a ſonne: if thou be a ſonne, thou art alſo an heire of God through Chriſt.

THis text toucheth the very pith of Paules chiefe doctrine, the cauſe why it is well vnderſtood of ſo few, is not, for that it is ſo obſcure and hard, but becauſe there is almoſt no knowledge of faith left in the worlde, without which it can not be that one ſhould rightly vnderſtand Paule, who euery where intreateth of fath with ſuch force of the ſpirit as he is able. I muſt therefore ſpeake ſomewhat, that this text may be made plaine, and that I may more conueniently bring light vnto it in expounding it, I will ſpeake a few wordes in maner of a preface. Firſt therefore we muſt vnderſtand that that treatiſe, wherin is intreated of good workes, doth farre differ from that wherein is intreated of iuſtification, as there is verie great difference betweene the ſubſtance and the working, betweene a man & his worke. Now iuſtification is of man, and not of workes: for man is either iuſtified and ſaued, or iudged and condemned, and not workes. Neither is it in controuerſie among the godly, that man is iuſtified by no worke, but righteouſnes muſt come vnto him from ſome other where, then from his owne workes. For Moſes writeth of Abel after this ſort: The Lord had reſpect vnto Abel, and to

God first regardeth the man, and the the worke.

his oblation. First he had respect to Abel himselfe, then to his oblation, because that Abel was first counted righteous, entire, and acceptable vnto God, and then for his sake his oblation also was alowed, and not he because of his oblation. Againe, God had no respect to Cain, and therefore neither to his oblation: where againe thou seest, that regard is had first of the worker thē of the worke. Of this place it is verie plainely gathered, that no worke can be allowed of God, whereas he which worketh that worke, was not first acceptable to him: and againe, that no worke is disalowed of him, vnles the authour thereof be disallowed before. I thinke that these thinges wilbe sufficient concerning this matter in this place, of which it is easie to vnderstande, that there are two sortes of workes: some going before iustification, and some folowing it, and that these last are good workes in deede, but that those other do onely appeare to be good. Hereof commeth such disagreement betweene God, & those counterfect holy ones, for this cause Nature and Reason rise & rage against the holy Ghost: this is that, whereof almost al the whole Scripture intreateth. The Lord in his worde defineth, that all workes that goe before iustification, are euyll, and of no importaunce, and requireth that man himselfe before all thinges be iustified.

Man before he is regenerate can doe nothing that is good.

Againe, he pronounceth all men, which are not yet regenerate, and haue not chaunged that nature, which they receiued of their parentes, with the newe creature of Christ, to be vnrighteous and wicked, accordyng to that saying Psal. 116. All men are lyers, that is, vnable to performe their dutie, and to doe those thinges, which by right they ought. And Gen. 6. The hart of man is alwayes ready vnto euyll, whereby vndoubtedly it commeth to passe, that he is able to doe nothing that is good, which hath the fountaine of actions, that is his hart, corrupted. And if he do many workes which in outward shew seeme good, they are no better then the oblation of Cain.

God hath regard first to the worker then to the worke, reason doth quite contrarie, affirming that by his workes the worker is iustified.

Here against commeth forth Reason, our reuerend maistres, seeming to her selfe maruelous wise, yet in deede is vnwise and blinde, and is not ashamed to gainesay her God, & to reproue him of lying, she being furnished with her follies and verie strawie armour, to wit, the lyght of nature, free will, the strength of nature, also with the bookes of the heathen, and with the doctrines of men. She dareth with her euyll sounding stringes make a noyse

noyſe againſt God, that the woꝛkes of a man euen not yet iuſtified, are good woꝛkes, and not woꝛkes like vnto Cains, (which God pꝛonounceth) yea and ſo good, that he that woꝛketh them is iuſtified by them. Foꝛ ſo Ariſtotle hath taught, that he that woꝛketh well is made good. Vnto this ſaying ſhe leaneth and ſticketh vnmoueably, and wꝛeſteth the Scripture cleane contrarie, contending that God will haue reſpect firſt to the woꝛkes, thē to the woꝛker. Such verie deuelish doctrine beareth the ſway now euery where in ſcholes, colleges & monaſteries, wherein no other ſaincts, then Cain was, haue rule and authoꝛitie. Now of this errour an other immediatly ſpꝛingeth. They which attribute ſo much to woꝛkes, & do not accoꝛdinly eſteeme the woꝛker and ſound iuſtification, go ſo farre, that they aſcribe all merit and ſoueraigne righteouſnes to woꝛkes done befoꝛe iuſtification, making almoſt no account of faith, alleaging that which James ſaith, that without woꝛkes it is dead. Which ſentence of the Apoſtle when they little vnderſtand, they attribute almoſt nothing to faith, they alwayes ſticke to woꝛkes, whereby they thinke they do merit exceedingly of God, and are perſwaded that foꝛ their woꝛkes ſake they ſhall obtaine the fauour of God, and by this meanes doe they continually diſagree with God, ſhewing themſelues to be the right poſteritie of Cain. God hath reſpect vnto man, theſe to the woꝛkes of man: God alloweth the woꝛkes foꝛ his ſake that woꝛketh, theſe require that foꝛ the woꝛkes ſake the woꝛker may be crowned. Now God goeth not from his ſentence, as it is meete and iuſt, and theſe will ſeeme nothing leſſe thē to erre in any reſpect. They will not haue their good woꝛkes contemned, reaſon to be nothing eſteemed, free will to be counted vneffectuall, oꝛ ſurely, if thou doeſt here ſtriue againſt them, they beginne to be angrie whith God and count it a ſmall matter to kill their bꝛother Abel.

But here perhaps thou wilt ſay: what is needfull to be done? by what meanes ſhal I firſt of all becomme righteous, and acceptable to God? How ſhall I attaine to this perfect iuſtification? The Goſpell aunſwereth, pꝛeaching that it is neceſſarie that thou heare Chꝛiſt, and repoſe thy ſelfe wholy in him, denying thy ſelfe, & diſtruſting all thine owne ſtrength. By this meanes thou ſhalt be chaunged from Cain to Abel, & being thy ſelfe acceptable, ſhalt offer acceptable giftes to the Loꝛd. This faith, as

it is preached vnto thee for no merit of thine owne, so is it giuen vnto thee for no deseruing of thine, but of meere grace. And this faith iustifieth thee, thou being endewed herwith the Lord remitteth all thy sinnes, and that by the contemplacion of Christ his sonne, in whom this faith beleeueth and trusteth. Moreouer he giueth vnto such a faith his spirit, which doth throughly chaunge a man and make him new, so that now he hath other reason, and an other will, then before, namely that which is ready vnto good. Such a one worketh nothing but good workes, neither can it be but good, which he being good before, shall do, whereof I haue spoken somewhat before. Wherefore nothing else is required vnto iustificatiou, then to heare Iesus Christ our Sauiour and to beleeue in him, howbeit neither of these is the worke of nature, but both of onely grace. He therefore that goeth about to attaine hereunto by workes, shutteth the way to the Gospell, to faith, grace, Christ, God, and all thinges that helpe vnto saluation. Againe, vnto good workes there is neede onely of iustification, which he that hath attained, doth worke onely good workes, and beside such a one, none. Herof it sufficiently appeareth, that the beginning, the thinges following, and the order of mans saluation are after this sort. First of all is required, that thou heare the word of God, next that thou beleeue, then that thou doe worke, & so at the last become saued & happie. He which chaungeth this order, without doute is not of God. Paul also describeth this order Rom. 10. saying: Whosoeuer shall call vpon the Name of the Lord, shalbe saued. But how shall they call on him, in whom they haue not beleeued? and how shall they beleeue in him, of whom thy haue not heard? and how shall they heare without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? Therfore Christ teacheth vs to pray the Lord of the haruest, that he would send forth labourers into his haruest, that is, syncere preachers. Whē we heare these preach the true word of God, we may beleeue, which faith iustifieth a man, and maketh him godly in deede, that he now calleth vpon God in the spirit of the sonnes, and worketh nothing but that which is good, and thus becōmeth a man saued. Which is no other thing, then if I say: He that beleeueth shalbe saued. Againe, he that worketh without faith is condemned, as Christ sayth: He that doth not beleeue shalbe condemned, from which no workes shall deliuir him.

What is required to iustification.

Con-

Confer now herewith those thinges which are wont commonly to be spoken of honestie and righteousnes. Are they not wont thus to say? I will endeuour, that I may yet become honest. It is meete surely that we study to lead an honest life & to do good workes. Well, admit this to be so. But if one then aske them how we may apply our selues vnto honestie, and by what meanes we may attaine vnto it: they aunswere, that we must fast, praye, frequent temples, auoyde synns &c. Hereupon one becommeth a Charterhouse Monke, an other choseth some other order of monkes: an other is consecrated a Priest: some torment their flesh by wearing heare cloth: other scourge their bodyes with wipps, other afflict themselues after other sorts. But these are euen of Cains, broode, & their workes are no whit better then the workes of Cain. For the man himselfe continueth the same that he was before, vngodly, and without all iustification: there is a certaine chaunge made only of outward workes, of apparell, of places &c. Neither are these any other thē very apes of saincts, for they do preposterously imitate the manners & workes of saincts, when as they themselues are nothing lesse then saincts. They scarce think of faith, they presume only of such workes as seeme good vnto thēselues, thinking by them to come vnto heauē. Of whom Christ said: Enter in at the straight gate: for I say vnto you, many seeke to enter in at it, & can not. Why is this? because they know not what this narrow gate is. For it is faith, which doth altogither annihillate or make a man nothing in his owne eyes, & requireth ẏ he put no trust in any of his owne workes, but that he leane only to ẏ grace of God, & be prepared for it to leaue & suffer al things. But those holy ones of Cains broode thinke their good workes to be the narrow gate, & are not therefore extenuated, or made lesse whereby they might enter: they do not leaue confidence in their workes, but gathering them togither in great coules, they hang them about them, and so go about to inter in being burdened, and as it were swollen bigge, which is as possible for them, as for a camel with his bounched backe to goe through ẏ eye of a needle.

Hypocritical & counterfet holines.

Whē thou shalt begin to preach vnto these of faith, they laugh and hisse at thee: Doest thou count vs, say they, for Turkes and Heathen, whom it behoueth now first to learne faith? Is there such a companie of Prists, Monkes and Nunnes, & is not faith knowne? Who knoweth not what he ought to beleeue? euen ma-

nifest synners know that. And being after this sort animated and stirred vp, they thinke that they be aboundātly endued with faith, and that the rest is now to be finished & made perfect by workes. Whereupon they make too small & slender account of faith, as I haue said, because they be ignorant both what faith is, & that it alone doth iustifie. They call it faith, when they beleeue those thinges which they haue hard of Christ, which kinde of fayth the Deuels also haue, & yet are nothing therefore iustified: but this deserueth to be called rather an opinion of men then faith. For as we do oftentimes admonish, it is not sufficient, that thou maiest worthely be called a Christian, to beleeue those things to be true, which are preached of Christ, which kinde of faith they of Cains
A true faith. broode also haue: but thou must also nothing doute, that thou art of the number of them, vnto whom al those benefits of Christ are giuen & exhibited. Which he that beleeueth, must plainely cōfes, that he is holy, godly, righteous, the sonne of God, and certaine of saluation, & that by no merit of his owne, but by the onely mercy of God poured forth vpon him for Christes sake. Which he beleeueth to be so rich and plentifull, as it is in deede, that although he be as it were drowned in sinnes, he is notwithstanding thereby made holy & the sonne of God. Whereof if he should any thing dout, he should procure exceeding ignominie & reproch to baptisme which he hath receiued, & to the Lords supper, & also reproue ỳ word & grace of God of falshood. Wherefore take heede that thou nothing dout, that thou art ỳ sonne of God, & therefore righteous, by his grace, let all feare & care be here awaye. Howbeit thou must feare & trēble that thou maist perseuer such a one vnto ỳ end: Thou must not being in this case, be careful that thou maist become righteous & saued, but that thou maist perseuer and cōtinue. Neither must thou do this, as though it cōsisteth in thine own strēgth, for al thy righteousnes & saluation is of only grace, wherunto onely thou must trust: But whē thou knowest that it is of grace alone, & that thy faith is also the gift of God, thou shalt for good cause liue in feare & care, lest ỳ any tentation do violētly moue thee frō this faith. Herupon pertaineth that which is written in the 9. chap. of Ecclesiastes: The righteous & wise, yea and their seruauuts also are in the hād of God, & there is no mā that knoweth either loue or hate, but al things are before thē. It happeneth vnto one as vnto an other, &c. For ỳ present time euery

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one by faith is certaine of our ſaluation, but conſtantly to ſtand and perſeuer as it is the gift of the Lord, and not in our owne ſtrength, ſo ought we alwayes to haue a care and feare thereof.

Whē they of Cains broode heare faith to be intreated of after this ſort, they can not ſufficiently maruell at our madnes, as it ſeemes vnto them. God turne this away from me ſay they, that I ſhould affirme my ſelfe holy and godly, farre be this arrogancie and raſhnes from me. I am many wayes a miſerable ſinner, I ſhould be mad, if I ſhould arrogate holines vnto my ſelfe. And thus they mocke at true faith, and count ſuch doctrine as this for execrable errour, and goe about with might and maine to extinguiſh the Goſpell. Theſe are they that deny the faith of Chriſt, & perſecute it in the whole world, of whom Paul ſpeaketh 1. Tim. 4. In the latter times many ſhall depart from the faith, &c. For we ſee it brought to paſſe by the meanes of theſe, that true faith lyeth euery where oppreſſed, is not onely not preached, but alſo commonly diſallowed and condemned, with all them that either teach or profeſſe it. The Pope, Biſhops, Colleges, Monaſteries, and Vniuerſities haue nowe aboue fiue hundred yeares perſecuted it with one mind and conſent, yea and that maruelous ſtiffely and obſtinatly, and haue done no other thing vnto the world, but euery where as much as they were able driuen many vnto hell. Which truely both hath bene and is that laſt and moſt hurtfull perſecution of Antichriſt: The Lord at the laſt bring it to an end.

Denyers of the faith of Chriſt.

If any obiect againſt the admiration or rather mad senſleſnes of theſe men, that we doe nothing but that that is meete, if we count our ſelues euen holy, truſting to the goodnes of God iuſtifying vs, ſeeing that Dauid prayed thus: Preſerue thou me, O Lord for I am holy. And for that Paule ſayth: The ſpirit of God beareth witnes with our Spirit that we are the children of God. They aunſwer that the Prophet and Apoſtle would not teath vs in theſe words, or giue vs an example, which we ſhould follow, but that they being peculiarly and ſpeciall enlightened, receiued ſuch reuelatiō of them ſelues, that they were holy. And after this ſort they miſinterpret and wreſt whatſoeuer place of the Scriptures affirmeth that we are holy, ſaying that ſuch doctrines are not written for vs, but that they are rather peculiar miracles and prerogatiues as they cal them, which doe not belonge to all. Which forged imagination we account of, as hauing come from

Pſal. 86. 2.
Rom. 8. 16.

their ſicke braine, who when as they themſelues void of faith, and ſauour nothing of the ſpirit, thinke and contend, that there be none which haue ſounde faith and the ſpirit, whereby ſurely they beleeue them ſelues to be thornes and thiſtles, not Chriſtians but rather enemies and deſtroyers of Chriſtians, and perſecutors of the Chriſtian faith.

The Papiſts attribute more to their owne works then to God his grace.

Againe, they are of this beleefe, that they ſhall be righteous & holy by their owne workes, and that becauſe of them God will giue vnto them ſaluation and eternal bleſſednes. But here ſee the madnes of men: in their opinion and iudgement it is a Chriſtian thinge, to thinke that we ſhall be righteous and ſaued becauſe of our workes, and to beleeue that theſe thinges are giuen by the grace of God, they condemne as hereticall. They attribute that to their owne workes which they attribute not to the grace of God: they affirme that they doe ſaue vs, and not this: they truſt to works, they can not truſt to Gods grace: which blindnes worthely commeth vnto them, inaſmuch as they will not build vpon the rocke, let them build vpon the ſand, & ſo to be drowned by their owne meanes, that by their owne workes and ſatisfactions they may torment them ſelues euen vnto death, gratifying Satan herein, for that they will not reſt vpon the grace of God, & ſerue the Lord with a gentile and ſweete ſeruice. For they that are endued with true faith, and do reſt vpon the grace of the Lord, it is meruelous, how they are in God, by his goodnes, of moſt quiet mindes, and greatly reioycing with holy ioy: whereuppon they do alſo with pleaſure applie them ſelues to goodworkes, not to ſuch as theſe of Cains broode doe, as to fayned prayers, faſting, baſe & filthy apparel, & ſuch like trifles, but to true and right good workes, whereby their neighbour is profited, and from whence no ſmall commoditie redoundeth vnto men. Moreouer, they are of moſt ready mindes to ſuffer whatſoeuer thinges, inaſmuch as they are certaine that God doth fauour them, and hath a care of them. Theſe are right honeſt and profitable men, of whom both God is glorified, & men much profited. When as thoſe of Cains broode ſerue to no vſe, either before God or before men, no they doe not ſo much as profit them ſelues, but are onely an vnprofitable lumpe of earth, yea not onely vnprofitable, but exceeding pernicious and hurtfull alſo both to them ſelues, and to others. For inaſmuch as they are deſtitute of true faith, they can not giue vn-

They that are endued with a true faith, are both ioyfull in God and dutifull to ward their neighbours.

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to God his due glory, nor doe those good workes which may truly profit their neighbour. For those works that they apply themselues vnto, are their owne inuentions, consisting in gestures, apparell, places, times, meates and such like trifles, wherby their neighbour can be holpen neither in body, nor minde, nor in any thing els. For what can it profit me that thy crowne is shauen very broad: that thou wearest a gray coule: what profit bringeth it, that thou fastest to day, and keepest holy day to morrow: that thon abstainest from this meate, and eatest that: that thou remainest in this place: that thou readest and mumblest vp daily so many wordes? Surely thou dost nothing els by these, but torment thy selfe to please Satan, and to be a pernicious and hurtfull example to thy neigbours: for there is no Christianitie in thy life being such thou beleeuest not as it behoueth a Christian to beleeue, and therefore neither doost thou pray Christianly: Thy fasting also is not true chastising of the body, but rashly taken vpon thee in steede of a good worke: In a summe, this thy seruice and study of religion is no other thing, then in time past among the Iewes was the religion of Moloch and Baal, in the honour of whom they did kill and burne euen their owne children. So pernitious and pestilent an example is this thy holines, which seemeth so godly vnto thee, which when it meruelously counterfaiteth a shew of goodlines, it draweth miserable men to the following therof, and vtterly extinguisheth true religion.

Where true faith is wanting, there neither God can be duly glorified, nor true good works done.

Here perhaps some godly man will thinke: If the matter be so, and our workes doe not saue vs, but onely to heare Christ and beleeue in him, who is giuē vnto vs of the Father to be our righteousnes and saluation, to what ende then are so many precepts giuen vnto vs, and why doth God seuerly require that they be obeyed? The present text of the Apostle shall giue vnto vs the solution of this question, and vpon this fit occasion we will now enter into the exposition thereof. The Galathians being taught of Paule the faith of Christ, but afterwards seduced by false Apostles, thought that the matter of our saluation must be finished & made perfect by the workes of the law, and that onely faith doth not suffize. These Paule calleth backe againe from workes vnto faith with great diligence, and words meruelous effectual, plainly proning that the workes of the law which goe before faith, do make vs onely seruaunts, and be of no importance to godlines &

ſaluation but that faith doth make vs the ſonnes of God, & that from thence true good workes do without conſtraint forthwith moſt plentifully flowe. But here we muſt accuſtom our ſelues to the wordes of the Apoſtle: He calleth him a ſeruant that is occupied in workes without faith, whereof we haue already intreated at large: he calleth him a ſonne, which is righteous and liueth by faith alone, without workes. The reaſon hereof is this: this ſeruaunt, although he apply him ſelfe to good workes, yet he doth it not with that minde, with which a ſonne doth, that is with a minde that is free, willing, & certaine that the inheritance and all the good thinges of the Father are his: but doth it as he that is hyred with a ſtipend in an other mans houſe, who hopeth not that the inheritance ſhal come vnto him. The workes in deede of the ſonne and the ſeruaunt are like, & almoſt al one according to the outward appearance, but their mindes do differ exceeding much, and their hope is nothing like, euen as Chriſt him ſelfe ſayth: The ſeruaunt abydeth not in the houſe for euer: but the ſonne abydeth for euer. Joh. 8. Theſe of Cains broode want the faith of ſonnes, which they them ſelues confeſſe, for they thinke it a moſt abſurd thing, & wicked arrogancie, to affirme them ſelues to be the ſonnes of God and holy, therefore as they beleue, euen ſo are they counted before God, they neuer become the ſonnes of God, or holy, neuertheles they are exerciſed with the workes of the law, and are well wearied, wherefore they are and remaine ſeruaunts for euer. And they receiue no other reward, but theſe tempozall thinges namely, quietnes of life, aboundance of goods, dignitie and honours, &c. Which we ſee to be vſuall among the followers of Popiſh religion, then whom there is none at this day that liueth more pleaſantly, more welthily, more gloriouſly and honorably. But this is their reward, they are ſeruaunts and not ſonnes, wherefore in death they ſhall be thruſt from all good thinges, neither ſhall any portion of the eternal inheritance come vnto them, who in this preſent life would beleeue nothing thereof. So therefore it is that ſeruaunts and ſonnes are not much vnlike in workes, but in minde and faith they are moſt vnlike.

Whom Paul calleth a ſeruaunt, and whom a ſonne in the text which is here intreated of.

Now the Apoſtle endeuoureth here to proue, (which in deede is the very matter) that the law with all the workes thereof doth make vs no other then ſeruaunts, if this faith in Chriſt, whereof we haue ſpoke, be away. For that alone doth make vs the ſonnes

of

of God. Neither the law nor nature can giue it, onely the Gospel bringeth it, when it is heard with an holy silence of minde. It is the word of grace, which the holy Ghost doth forthwith followe, as it is shewed in very many places, and specially Act. 10. where we read, that the holy Ghost did by and by fall on Cornelius and his familie hearing the preaching of Peter. Moreouer the lawe was geuen for this, that we might learne by it, how voyde we are of grace, and how farre from being of the minde of sonnes, yea that we are plainely of a seruile minde. For we being left to our selues, can in no wise be free from the lawe, neither if we doe any good thing, doe we it willingly, forasmuch as that faith of sonnes is wanting, wherewith he that is indued, knoweth assuredly, that the eternall inheritance shall come vnto him, and is of his owne accord inclined and bent, with a willing and ready spirit to doe those thinges that are good. Now these men doe willingly confesse that they are voyde of this faith, and if they would confesse the truth in deede, they should also plainly confesse, that they had farre rather be without all lawe, and that they are agaynst their willes subiect thereunto. Wherefore all thinges are among them constrained, and voyde of faith, & they are in very deede compelled to confesse that by the lawe they can not attaine any further. Which one thing they ought to learne by the law, and know, that they are seruauntes, & haue nothing belonging to sonnes, whereby they might be inflamed with desire to come from seruitude to the state and condition of sonnes: and might make no account of their owne thinges, as in deede they ought to do, that God of his grace might aduaunce them vnto an other state by faith. Nowe this were a sound vnderstanding of the law, and the true vse thereof, whereof this is the office, to reproue and conuince men hereof, that they are seruauntes and not sonnes, as many as folow the lawe without faith, and that they doe exercise themselues therein plainly against their wils, and with no confidence of grace. For it causeth and maketh such to be offended at it, and learne by it, howe vnprepared and vnwilling they are to that which is good, inasmuch as they are voyd of faith, whereby it moueth them to seeke helpe some other where, and not to presume of their owne strength to satisfie it. For it requireth a ready will, and hartes of sonnes, which alone can satisfie it: it vtterly refuseth seruauntes, and them that be vnwilling.

The law why it was giuen.

The office of the lawe.

But these of Cains broode doe not onely of their owne accord confesse that they want this faith, which maketh the sonnes of God, but also they persecute it: they feele and know also ful wel, how vnwillingly they beare the lawe, and had rather to be free from it, neuertheles they thinke that they shal become righteous by these their vnwilling and constrayned workes. They will continue seruauntes, & wil not be chaunged into sonnes, and yet they would enioy the goods of a straunge father. They doe all things cleane out of order: whereas by the law they ought to learne, that they are seruaunts, and vnwilling to doe that which is good, and therefore should by faith aspire to the state of sonnes, notwithstanding they go so farre that they seeke to satisfie and fulfill it by their owne workes onely. And thereby they do altogither hinder the end of the law, and striue against faith and grace, whereunto if they were not blind, the law would direct and driue them: And so they continue alwayes, a blinde, blockish, and miserable people. These thinges Paule teacheth Rom. 3. and 7. and doth freely pronounce that no man is iustified before God by ỹ workes of the lawe, adding no other cause hereof, then this, for that the knowledge of sinne only commeth by the law. If thou wilt know howe this commeth to passe, consider well some one of Cains brood, and thou shalt byandby se it verified. First he worketh his workes according to the lawe, with great griefe and labour, and yet he therewith confesseth, that he is vncertaine whether he be the sonne of God, and holy. Yea he condemneth and curseth this faith, as the most pernicious arrogancie and errour of all other, & will continue in his douting, vntill he be made certaine by his workes. Here thou seest plainely that such a man is not good or righteous, seeing that he wanteth this faith and beleefe, that he is counted acceptable before God, and his sonne, yea he is an enemie of this faith, and therefore of righteousnes also: Wherefore neither can his workes be counted good, although they pretend a faire shew of fulfilling the law. And thus is it easie to vnderstand that which Paule sayth: that no man is iustified before God by the workes of the law. For the worker must be iustified before God, before he worketh any good thing, although before men, which esteeme a man by outward thinges, and not by the mind, they are counted righteous which apply themselues to the doing of good workes. For men iudge the worker by the workes,

No man is iustified by the lawe.

God

God iudgeth the wozkes by the wozker. Nowe the first pzecept requireth, that we acknowledge & wozship one God, that is, that we trust and rest in him alone, which in deede is the true faith, whereby we becomme the sonnes of God. But how easie is it by this pzecept to know, that sinne is both in him of Cains bzood & in thy selfe, inasmuch as both of you want such a faith, euen by your owne nature? which thou couldest not know but by meanes of this law. And this is that which Paul meaneth when he sayth: That by the law commeth the knowledge of sinne. Now thou canst be deliuered from this cuell of infidelitie, neither by thyne owne power, noz by the power of the lawe, wherefoze all thy wozkes whereby thou goest about to satisfie the lawe, can be nothing but wozkes of the lawe, of farre lesse importance, then that they are able to iustifie thee befoze God: who counteth them only righteous, which truly beleeue in him, foz they ỳ only acknowledge him the true God, are his sonnes, and doe truely fulfill the law. But if thou shouldest euen kill thy selfe with wozkes, yet is it so farre of, that thy heart can obtaine this faith therby, that thy wozkes are euen a hinderance that thou canst not knowe it, yea they are a cause that thou doost persecute it. *Rom.3.20*

Hereupon it is, that he that studieth to fulfill the law without faith, is afflicted foz the deuils sake, and not foz Gods sake, and continueth a persecutour both of faith and of the lawe, vntill he come to himselfe, and doth plainly ceasse to trust in him selfe and in his owne wozkes, doth giue this glozie to God, who iustifieth the vngodly, acknowlegeth himselfe to be nothing, and sigheth foz God his grace, whereof he doth now know, being taught by the law, that he hath neede. Then faith and grace come and fil him being emptie, satisfie him being hungry, by and by follow good wozkes which are truely good: Neither are they now the wozkes of the lawe, but of the spirit, of faith and grace, and they are called in the Scriptures the wozkes of God, which he wozketh in vs. Foz whatsoeuer we do of our owne power & strength, & is not wzought in vs by his grace, whithout dout it is a wozke of the law, and auaileth nothing to iustification, but is both euill and hated of God, because of the infidelitie wherein it is done. Againe, whatsoeuer he of Cains bzood wozketh, he doth nothing from his hart, nothing freely and with a willing mind, exzept he be as it were hyzed with some reward, oz be commaunded to doe. All that we doe of our selues being not assisted by the grace of God, is euill.

some such thing, whereunto he ought otherwise to be readie of him selfe: Euen as an euyll and vnthriftie seruaunt suffereth him selfe to be brought to no worke, vnles he be hyred with a reward, or commaunded, whereunto he ought otherwise to be willing of him selfe. Now how vnpleasaunt is it to a man to haue such seruauntes? But they of Cains brood be plainly such, they would do no good worke at all, if they were not either compelled by ꝑ feare of hell, or allured by the hope of present good thinges. Whereby againe thou seest, that these haue no mind to ꝑ law, they gape onely for gaine, or are moued with feare, whereby they bewray themselues, that they do rather hate the lawe from their hart, and had leuer that there were no law at al: Wherefore it is plainely manifest, that they are not good, and consequently that neither their workes be good: for how should euyll men worke good workes? Moreouer those their workes, which in apparance & shew seeme to be good, are either wrested from them by feare, or are bought with promises. An euyll hart can do nothing that is good. But this naughtines of the hart and vnwillingnes to do good, the lawe bewrayeth when it teacheth, that God doth not greatly esteeme what the hand doth, but what the hart doth: which, seeing it hateth the lawe that is good, who wil deny it to be most euyl? Surely it is a sinne to be against the lawe, which is very good. Thus therefore sinne is knowne by the lawe, according as Paule teacheth, forasmuch as we learne thereby, howe our affection is not set on that which is good, which ought to terrifie vs, and driue vs to ceasse to trust in our selues, and to long after the grace of God, whereby this naughtines of the hart may be taken away, and our mind may become such, as is of it selfe ready to good things, and loueth the lawe, which voluntarily, not for feare of any punishment, or respect of reward, but because it doth of it owne accord like well of the law, and loue righteousnes, worketh those things which are truely good: By this meanes onely one is made of a seruaunt a sonne, of a slaue an heire. Which mind and spirit thou shalt receiue by no other meanes, then by faith in Christ, as it is before spoken at large. Now let vs come to entreate of the text of Paule.

What the knowledge of sinne which commeth by the law, ought to worke in vs

verse. 1. The heire as long as he is a childe, differeth nothing from a seruant, though he be Lord of all.

He

Lawe. For whereas he sayth, that Christ was made vnder the Lawe, he woulde signifie, that Christ did put himselfe vnder the Lawe of his owne accorde, and was with his will made subiect vnto it of the Father, when as he might not haue bin vnder the Lawe. But we were vnder the Lawe, being the seruauntes of the Lawe by nature, and bearing the dominion thereof vnwillingly: as Christ was willingly, not by nature, and against his will. Wherefore there is as great difference betweene, To be made vnder the Lawe, and, To be vnder the Lawe by nature, as betweene these, To be subiect to the Lawe of free will, and, To be subiect to the Lawe by seruile constraint. It was free vnto Christ, to be vnder the Lawe, or not to be vnder it, and he made himselfe subiect to it of his owne accorde, that he might most diligently do all thinges that the Lawe requireth: but we were vnder the Lawe, euen against our will.

Christes being vnder the Lawe and ours.

It is one thing, to be made vnder the Lawe, & an other to be vnder the Law by nature.

Thou mayst see a resemblaunce hereof in Peter, and the Angell which came into the prison to Peter to deliuer him. Both of them were then in the prison, but Peter was there being cast into it of Herode, not of his owne accorde, wherein he was also to abide, for he could not goe forth when he woulde. But the Angell went into the prison of his owne accorde, whereupon it was free for him also to goe forth when he would: he was there onely for Peters sake and not for his owne, and freely euen at his owne will, whom when Peter heard and folowed, it was free for him also to goe forth of the prison, where as before it was not. This prison is the Lawe: Peter is our conscience: The Angell is Christ. Christ being absent, our conscience is holde captiue of the Lawe, and being vnwilling of it selfe, is mooued vnto good thinges by the threatninges and promises thereof, and is tied and bounde vnto honest thinges with these, as with two chaines. The keepers of this prison are the teachers of the Lawe, which declare the force of the Lawe vnto vs. So we being bound in the prison of the Lawe, Christ commeth vnto vs, and willingly maketh himselfe subiect to the Lawe, and doth the workes of the Lawe of his owne accorde, which we did bend our selues to doe against our willes, yea and doth them for our sake, that he may ioyne vs vnto him, and also bring vs out together with himselfe. For he may easily goe forth, who is holde in the prison by no necessitie. If now we cleaue vnto him, and follow him, we also doe

Ours, and Christes being vnder the Lawe, & our deliuerance from the same most excellently resembled.

goe forth. But this cleauing to him and following of him is nothing els, then to beleeue in him, and not to doubt that he became man, and was made subiect to the Lawe for thy saluations sake. Together with this faith commeth the spirite, he byandby maketh thee ready and willing to doe with pleasure all thinges that the Lawe requireth: and so truely deliuereth thee from the captiuitie of the Lawe, those chaines of threatninges and promises fal of from thee, and thou mayst now go whither thou list, that is, thou mayst liue according to thine owne wil, or rather according to the will of the holy Ghost ruling all thinges in thee: finally, what good thinges soeuer thou doest, thou doest them from the hart, and with great pleasure.

Christ made vnder the law after two sortes.

Moreouer, that it may be made more plaine, after what sort Christ made himselfe subiect to the Lawe, we must vnderstande that he was made vnder the Law after two sortes: both for that he did perfectly performe the workes of the Lawe, and also for that he suffered and ouercame the curse and punishment thereof for our sake. For he was circumcised, presented in the temple, and the time of the purification being finished, was obedient to his parentes. All which thinges he might haue omitted, being Lord of the Lawe, and ouer all: Howbeit he applied himselfe to these thinges freely of his owne will, not being either compelled by any feare, or allured by any hope. In outward workes he was in the meane season altogether like vnto them which were vnder the Law, that is, which did the workes of the Law against their willes, in asmuch as his free spirit was hidden from others, euen as also the seruile and constrained will of others is hidden. And so he both was vnder the Lawe, and not vnder the Lawe. He behaued himselfe outwardly in workes, as they which are vnwillingly holde vnder the Lawe, when as notwithstanding he was not vnder the Lawe as they, but of his owne free will: Wherefore in respect of his workes he was vnder the Lawe, but in respect of his will he was free from the Lawe. But we as well by will as by workes are vnder the Lawe by nature, for that we doe workes according to the rule of the Lawe, of necessitie, yea and we doe them with that will which the Lawe constraineth and bydeth, in asmuch as we doe not endeuour to doe them of our owne accord. Christ made him selfe subiect to the punishment of the Lawe also for our sakes of his owne will. He did not onely per-

How we are vnder the Lawe.

forme those workes which the Lawe commaundeth, but he suffered the punishment also which was due to vs being transgressors thereof. The Lawe condemneth to death and the eternall curse all those that continue not in all thinges that are written in the booke of the Lawe to do them, as Paule Gal. 3. receiteth out of Moses Leuit. 18. Now it is declared at large before, that the Lawe is fulfilled of no man, but that all men are against their willes held captiues of the Law, wherefore euerie one is subiect to death and to the curse, so that there is no man subiect to the Lawe in respect of workes, and will, which is not also subiect to it in respect of the curse. For it curseth and condemneth all that do not performe it with their whole heart. But here Christ maketh intercession for them that be his, and the iudgement which we haue deserued, he taketh vpon himselfe, he suffered the punishment due vnto vs, willingly making himselfe subiect to death and the curse, that is, to eternall damnation, no otherwise then if he had transgressed the whole Law, and had more then all, deserued the sentence thereof against transgressours, when as he did not onely not breake the Lawe, but himselfe alone fulfilled it, yea and fulfilled it when as he ought nothing to it, so that he suffered otherwise then he deserued in two respects: both for that he had ought nothing to the Lawe, if he had not obserued it, and also for that moreouer he most diligently obserued it, so that if the Lawe had especiall dominion ouer him, yet had he come in no daunger thereof. Vnt on the otherside whereas we suffer, we suffer by double right: both for that by the transgression of the Lawe we haue deserued all the punishment thereof & also for that, if we had deserued nothing, yet being creatures we ought to be obedient to the will of our Creator.

Why Christ was made vnder the Law.

Hereof it now plainely appeareth, what this meaneth, that Christ was made vnder the Lawe, that he might redeeme them which liue vnder the lawe: for our sakes, for our sakes, I say, and not for his owne he performed that, and that of no necessitie, but of his great loue toward vs: and thereby he hath declared his vnspeakeable both goodnes and mercie toward vs, being made accursed for vs, that he might deliuer vs from the curse of the lawe. He willingly made himselfe subiect to the iudgement of the lawe, & did himselfe beare the sentēce pronounced against vs, that as many of vs as do beleeue in him, might be free for euer.

By fayth we enioye an incomparable treasure.

Whereby marke what an incomparable treasure faith bringeth vnto thee, whereby thou enioyest Christ and all his workes, that thou mayest trust vnto them no otherwise then if thou thy selfe hadest done them. For Christ did them not for himselfe, whom surely they could profit nothinge, he hauing no neede of any thinge, but by them he layde vp the treasure of saluation for vs, whereunto we should trust, and being made blessed might enioye it: With which faith also the spirit of the sonnes commeth, which beareth witnes with our spirit, that we are the sonnes and heires of God. What should God nowe adde vnto these? How can a mynde hearing these thinges containe it selfe, that it should not loue God againe with a most ardent affection, and be most sweetely delighted in him? What in any wise maye come to be done or suffered, which thou wouldest not willingly take vpon thee with exceeding ioye, and most highe praise of God, with a reioycing and triumphing mynde? Which minde if thou wantest, it is a certaine argument of a faint or surely a dead faith: for the greater thy faith is, so much more ready also and willinge is thy minde to those thinges, which God either sendeth or commaundeth. This in deede is the true deliuerance from the Lawe, and the damnation of the Lawe, that is, from sinne and death, which deliuerance commeth to vs by Christ. Yet not so, that there is nowe no lawe or death, but that they doe not now trouble the beleeuers any thinge, that is, they are as though they were not. For the Lawe can not conuince them of sinne, neither can death confound them: but by fayth they most happely passe from sinne and death to righteousnes and life.

How mens ordinances, ceremonies &c. are to be obserued.

Here Munkes, Nunnes &c. were to be exhorted, if there were as yet left any place with them for counsell and admonition, that they would obserue their ordinaunces, ceremonies, prayers, apparell, and such like, as Christ obserued the lawe, by which meanes surely they should bring vnto them no damnation: That is, that they would set the fayth of Christ in the first place, and commit the rule of their heart vnto him, acknowledgeing that by that faith onely they doe obtaine righteousnes and saluation: and that all their ordinaunces & workes do auaile nothing hereunto. Againe that they would make themselues subiect to them of their owne accord, in no other respect then that by them they might

might ſerue their neighbours, and ſubdue the arrogancie of the flesh. But now ſeing they are occupied in them with this double erroneous opinion, as though they were neceſſarie to ſaluation and righteouſnes, and if they did not obſerue them, they ſhould grieuouſly ſynne, they are vnto them a moſt certaine deſtruction, nothing but deluſion and ſynne, whereby with their great affliction they draw vnto hell, where they ſhall fully ſuffer the vexations and torments vnder the Abbat the deuell, which being miſerable and fooliſh men they haue here begon. For all their life doth vtterly diſagree, with the faith of the ſonnes, and that which belongeth onely to faith, to wit to iuſtifie and ſaue vs, they attribute to their workes. Wherefore theſe men can not both thus sticke vnto their ordinaunces, and therewithall haue faith, which ſuffereth it ſelfe to be addicted to no certaine workes, but what thinges ſoeuer the Lord either ſendeth or commaundeth, or the neceſſitie and neede of our neighbour requireth, it ſuffereth and doth them with great willingnes & ioy. Theſe he that is endued with faith, counteth his workes, hauing in the meane ſeaſon no regard of Maſſes, or faſting, which ſome appoint to certaine dayes, of choiſe of apparell, of meates, of perſons, of places and ſuch like, yea he greatly diſalloweth of theſe, inaſmuch as they trouble Chriſtian libertie. Theſe thinges ſhall ſuffice to haue bin ſpoken concerning the expoſition of this place of Paul, where about the matter it ſelfe required to ſpend ſo many wordes, forasmuch as the nature of faith is ſo vnknowen. For vnles thou doe well vnderſtand the nature of faith, thou ſhalt perceiue nothing or very litle in the writinges of Paul.

Verſe 6. And becauſe ye are ſonnes, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Sonne into your hearts, which cryeth, Abba, Father.

Here we ſee verie plainly, that the holy Ghoſt cõmeth vnto the Saincts, by no workes, but by faith alone, for Paule ſaith: And becauſe ye are ſonnes God hath ſent forth the Spirit, &c. Sõnes beleeue, when ſeruaunts onely worke: ſonnes are free from the Lawe, ſeruaunts are held vnder the Lawe, as appeareth plainly by thoſe thinges that are before ſpoken. But how commeth it to paſſe that he ſayth: Becauſe ye are ſonnes, God hath ſent forth the Spirit, &c. ſeeing it is before ſayd: that by the comming of the A queſtion

ſpirit we are chaunged from ſeruaunts vnto the ſtate of ſonnes, ſo that the ſpirit muſt be firſt ſent vnto vs, before we are ſonnes. But here as though we could be ſonnes before the comming of the ſpirit, he ſayth: Becauſe ye are ſonnes, &c. To this queſtion we muſt aunſwere, that Paule ſpeaketh here after the ſame ſort that he ſpake before: Before the fulnes of time came, we were in bondage vnder the rudiments of the world. All the elect, which are predeſtinate of the Lord that they ſhall become ſonnes, are counted in the place of ſonnes with God. Therfore he ſayth right ly: Becauſe ye are ſonnes, that is, becauſe the ſtate of ſonnes is appointed vnto you frō euerlaſting, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Sonne, to wit, that he might finiſh it in you, & make you ſuch, as he hath long ſince of his goodnes determined that he ſhould make you. Moreouer he calleth him the ſpirit of ỳ Sonne of God, that he might continue in commending vnto vs this beneſit of god, that he hath choſen vs to be ſonnes. For Chriſt is the Sonne of God, and that moſt beloued. Now if the father giue vnto vs his ſpirit, he will make vs like to his onely begotten ſonne, his true ſonnes and heires, that we may with certaine confidence crie with Chriſt, Abba, Father, being his brethren, and felow heires with him. Wherin ỳ Apoſtle ſurely hath notably ſet forth the goodnes of God, which, maketh vs pertakers with Chriſt and cauſeth vs to haue all thinges common with him, ſo that we liue, and are ledde by the ſame ſpirit. Moreouer theſe wordes of the Apoſtle doe ſhew, both that the holy Ghoſt is an other from Chriſt, and yet doth proceede from him, when as he calleth him his ſpirit. The ſpirit in deede dwelleth in the godly, and no man will ſay that he is their ſpirit, as here Paul maketh him the holy ſpirit of Chriſt, ſaying: God hath ſent forth ỳ ſpirit of his Sonne that is of Chriſt. For he is the ſpirit of God, & cōmeth from God to vs, and is not ours, vnles one will ſay after this ſort: my holy ſpirit, as we ſay: my God, my Lord. Wherefore whereas he is here ſayd to be ỳ holy ſpirit of Chriſt, it proueth him to be God, as of whom that ſpirit is ſent, & is peculiarly counted his ſpirit.

The anſwere

How we may know whether the holy Ghoſt dwell in vs or not.

Furthermore, Chriſtians may perceiue by this place, whether they haue in themſelues the holy Ghoſt, to wit, this ſpirit of the ſonne, whether they here his voyce in them ſelues. For Paul ſaith, that he crieth in the hearts which he poſſeſſeth, Abba, Father, according as he ſayth alſo Rom. 8. We haue receiued

the

the Spirit of adoptiō, whereby we crie Abba, Father. Now thou heareſt this voyce, when thou findeſt ſo much faith in thy ſelfe, that thou doeſt aſſuredly without any douting preſume, not onely that thy ſinnes be forgiuen thee, but alſo that thou art the beloued ſonne of God, which being certaine of eternall ſaluation, dareſt both call him Father, and be delighted in him with a ioyfull and moſt confident hart. Thou muſt be ſo certaine hereof, that thou canſt be no more certaine of thy life, and muſt ſooner ſuffer death, and helliſh tormentes, then ſuffer this truſt and confidence to be taken from thee. For to doubt any thing herein were no ſmall reproch and contumelie to the death of Chriſt, as though that had not obtained all thinges for vs, and ought not farre more effectually to prouoke and encourage vs to haue a good truſt in God, then al our ſinnes and temptations are able to put vs out of hope and fray vs from it. It may be in deede that thou ſhalt be ſo tempted, that thou ſhalt feare and doubt of thine opinion, and thinke plainely that God is not a fauourable Father, but a wrathfull reuenger of ſinnes, as it fell out with Iob and many other ſaincts, but in ſuch a conflict this truſt & confidence that thou art a ſonne, ought to preuaile and ouercome, or els thou ſhalt come into a miſerable and deſperate caſe.

When one of Cains broode heareth theſe thinges, he is as it were beſide himſelfe, by reaſon of admiration and aſtoniſhment. Fye, ſayth he, away with this arrogancie, and this moſt pernitious errour. God turne this minde from me, that I do not preſume to thinke that I am the ſonne of God: I am a ſinner, moſt miſerable and wretched, and will neuer eſteeme more of my ſelfe. But thou which deſireſt to belong vnto Chriſt, flye this kinde of men, no otherwiſe then moſt hurtfull enemies of Chriſtian faith, and of thy ſaluation. We alſo knowe that we are ſinners, and very miſerable and wretched: but here we muſt not weye or conſider, what we either doe, or are, but what Chriſt is, and what he hath done for our ſake. It is not ſpoken here of our nature, but of the grace of God, which ſo farre exceedeth our ſinnes, as heauen is higher then the earth, and the eaſt is diſtant from the weſt, as the. 103. Pſalme ſayth: Now if it ſeeme vnto thee a great honour that thou art the ſonne of God, as in deede it is very great, conſider that it is no leſſe meruelous, that the ſonne of God for this cauſe did come, was borne of a woman, and made

Though of ourſelues we be miſerable ſinners, yet we may aſſuredly perſwade our ſelues, that through Chriſt we are the ſonnes of God.

vnder the Lawe, that thou mightest become the sonne of God. These are great benefites of God, & do cause in the elect a great trust and confidence in the goodnes of God, and a spirit which is afraide of nothing, but is bolde and able to doe all thinges. Contrariwise the religion of those of Cains broode, as it is a thing meruellous strait and carefull, so doth it make hartes exceeding fearefull, which serue to no vse, but are vnapt to all thinges, fit neither to suffer or do any thing, which tremble and are afraide euen at the shaking of the leafe of a tree, as it was before spoken of them Leuit. 26.

Wherefore thou must lay vp these wordes of the Apostle wel in thy minde, thou must feele this crie of the spirit, which crieth so in the hartes of al ỹ faithful. For how shouldest thou not heare the crie of thine owne hart? Neither doth the Apostle say, that he doth whisper, speake, yea or syng, it is greater then all these which the spirite doth in the hart, he crieth out amaine, that is, with all the hart. Whereupon it is sayd Rom. 8. that he maketh request for vs with sighes that can not be expressed, and that he beareth witnes with our spirite, that we are the children of God: how therefore can it be, that our hart should not heare this crie, sighes, and testimonie of the spirit? Howbeit hereunto tentations and aduersitie are very profitable, they moue to crie, and do exceedingly stirre vp the spirit. Notwithstanding we foolish men do greatly feare and flye the crosse, wherefore it is no maruell if we do neuer feele the crie of the spirit, and do continually remaine like them of Cains broode. But if thou doest not feele this crie, take heede that thou be not idle and slouthfull, neither secure, pray instantly, for thou art in an euyll case. And yet do not desire, that thou maist feele nothing but this crie of the spirit, thou must feele also an other terrible crie made, whereby thou mayst be prouoked and vrged to this crie of the spirit, which happeneth to all the Saincts: That is the crie of sinnes, which cal most strongly and instantly vnto desperation, but this crie must be ouercome of the spirite of Christ, by godly calling vpō the Father, and crying for his grace, that the trust and confidence of grace may become greater then desperation. Wherefore this crie of the spirit is nothing els, but to be with all our hart touched with a very strong, firme, and vnmoueable trust of most deare sonnes towarde God, as our most tender and fauourable Father.

Aduersitie stirreth vp the spirite.

The crie of the spirite.

Hereby

Hereby we may see howe farre a Christian life exceedeth nature, which can doe nothing lesse then trust in God, and call vpon him as a Father, but is alwaies afraide, and vttereth a voyce which is a witnes of exceeding feare: Wo is me, how cruell and vntollerable a Judge art thou, O God? how heauie is thy iudgement vnto me? As Cain sayd Gen. 4. My iniquitie is more then that it may be forgiuen. Thou hast cast me out this day from the vpper face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid, yea it shal come to passe, that euery one that findeth me shal slay me. &c. This is a terrible and dreadfull crie, which is necessarily heard of all such as be of Cains brood, forasmuch as they trust to themselues and their owne workes, and put not their trust in the sonne of God, neither weie and consider that he was sent of the Father, made of a woman, made vnder the Lawe, much lesse that all these thinges were done for their saluation. They are continually tormented in their owne workes, the miserable men do in vaine goe about by them to helpe themselues, and to obtaine the grace of God. And while their vngodlines is not herewith content, it beginneth to persecute euen the sonnes of God, as it is alwayes wont to doe, yea at the last they growe vnto such crueltie, that after the example of their father Cain they can not rest, vntyl they slay their righteous brother Abell, in whom they doe also kill vnto themselues Christ. Then the blood of righteous Abell crieth vnto heauen against vnrighteous Cain, neither ceasseth it to cry vntill the Lord hath reuenged it. He asketh those Cains of their brother Abel, yea of Christ: but they denie al knowledge of Christ, which labour not to become the sonnes of God, and heires by Christ, but to become righteous by their owne workes. In the meane season the blood of Christ continually crieth out against them, euen nothing but punishment and vengeance, when as for the elect, it crieth by the spirite of Christ for nothing but grace and reconciliation.

A Christian life farre exceedeth nature.

The crie of them which trust in their owne works, and not in Christ.

The Apostle vseth here a Syrian, and a Greeke word, saying: Abba, Pater. For this worde Abba in the Syrian tongue signifieth a Father, by which name at this day the chiefe of Monasteries are wont to be called, and by the same name Heremites in time past being holy men, did call their Presidentes, at the last by vse it was also made a Latin word. Wherefore that which Paule sayth is as much as: Father, Father, or if thou hadst rather, as,

Why the Apostle doubled the word, Father

My Father. But what is the cause why the Apostle doth double the worde, Father, that is, the crie of the spirite? I will by your leaue bring forth my iudgement and opinion hereof: First I thinke that he would hereby shewe the force and streining of this holy cry. For when as we cal any with great affection & through no small necessitie, we are wont eftsoones to double his name. Nowe because that sinne, and Cain, doe alwayes goe about with desperation to stoppe this crie of the spirit for the grace of the father, it is neede surely to crie most strongly, and with a voice both doubled, and exceedingly strained forth, that is, the trust of the grace of the Father ought to be most strong, and not able to be ouercome. Againe such is the maner of the Scripture, to witnes the certaintie of a thing, sometime to double or iterate the words, as Ioseph did to Pharao Gen. 41. So here also the spirit twise calleth vpon the Father, whereby it may shewe the certainetie of his fatherly fauour and grace. For the trust hereof ought to be no lesse certaine, then great and vnmoueable. Finally it is meete also to persever, which againe this doubling of the name of Father doth note vnto vs. For as soone as we begin to call God Father, Satan with all his band moueth warre against vs, and omitteth no meanes to wrest from vs this trust of sonnes toward God our Father, wherefore ỹ word Father must be diligently doubled, that is, our trust and confidence must be confirmed, neither must we euer ceasse from calling vpon this Father, but must most earnestly continue in this crie of the spirit, whereby we may obteine a certaine sure experience of his fatherly goodnes, by which our trust in him may be made most certaine and safe. And perhappes Paule had respect hereunto, when he first set downe Abba, which is a word strange to them, to whom he wrote, after adding Pater, that is, Father, a familiar word and of their owne language, meaning to signifie hereby, that the beginning of so great trust in God is vnaccustomed and euen straunge vnto men, but that when the minde hath a while exercised it, and continued in it although assayled with temptations, it becommeth euen familiar & almost naturall, that we nowe enioy God as a domesticall Father, and doe in euery thing most confidently call vpon him.

Verse 7. Wherefore now thou art not a seruaunt, but a sonne: if thou be a sonne, thou art also an heire of

of God through Christ

Nowe, sayth he, that is after the comming of the spirit of the sonnes, after the knowledge of Christ, thou art not a seruaunt. For as it is sayd, a sonne and a seruaunt are so contrarie one to an other, that the same man can not be both a sonne and a seruaunt. A sonne is free and willing, a seruaunt is compelled and vnwilling: a sonne liueth, and resteth in faith: a seruaunt in workes. And so by this place also it appeareth, that we can obtaine no saluation of God by workes, but before thou workest that which is acceptable vnto him, it is necessarie that thou haue receiued of him and possesse saluation and all things, that thereupon workes may freely flow forth, to the honour of so gratious a father, and to the profit of thy neighbours, without any feare of punishment, or loking for reward. This, that which Paule sayth, proueth: If thou be a sonne, thou art also an heire. For it is sayd before, that we become the sonne of God by faith, without any workes, & therefore heires also, as this place witnesseth: for by nature they that are sonnes, the same also are heires. But if this inheritance of the Father be nowe thine by fayth, surely thou art riche in all good things, before thou hast wrought any thinge. For how should it be, ỳ by faith thou art the heire of God, wbout any workes through onely grace, and that thou maist againe first merit it by workes? Wherefore the case standeth, as I often times say: To a man that is baptized and beleeueth in Christ, the heauenly inheritance of the Father is already giuen at once, that is, all good thinges, they are only hid as yet by faith, for that the maner of the present life can not suffer, that he shoulde enioye them being reuealed. Whereupon Paule sayth Rom. 8. Ye are saued, but by hope, for ye doe not as yet see it, but doe yet waite, when the possession of your good thinges shall be reuealed. And 1. Pet. 1. it is sayd: Your saluation is reserued in heauen and prepared for you. to be shewed in the last time. Therfore the workes of a Christian ought not to haue regard of merit, which is the maner of seruaunts, but onely of the vse and commoditie of his neighbours, that he doe not liue and worke to him selfe, but to his neighbour, whereby he may truely liue to the glorie of God. For by faith he is rich in all good thinges, and truely blessed. Nowe the Apostle addeth, through Christ, lest that any thinke that so great inheri-

A sonne and a seruaunt doe greatly differ.

We can not obtaine saluation by workes.

Whereunto the workes of a Christian ought to be referred.

Although we are saued freely & with out all merit in respect of our selues yet Christ hath merited and with a deare price purchased saluation for vs.

tance commeth vnto vs freely, and without al cost. For although it be giuen vnto vs without our cost, and without all our merit, yet it cost Christ a deare price, who, that he might purchase it for vs, was made vnder the lawe, and satisfied it for vs both by life & also by death. So those benefits which of loue we bestowe vpon our neighbour, doe come vnto him freely, and without any charges or labour vnto him, notwithstanding they cost vs some thing, inasmuch as we bestow vpon him, although freely and of meere goodnes, yet those thinges that are our owne, whether it be labour or part of our substance, euen as Christ hath bestowed those thinges that be his vpon vs.

And thus hath Paule called backe his Galathians from the teachers of workes, which preached nothing but the law, peruerting the Gospell of Christ. All which thinges are very necessary to be marked of vs also. For the Pope with his Prelats and Monks, hath now too long a time with intruding and vrging his lawes, which are foolish and most pernitious, inasmuch as they doe euery where disagree with the word of God, seduced almost the whole world from the Gospell of Christ, & plainly extinguished the faith of sonnes, according as the Scripture hath in diuers places very manifestly prophesied of his kingdom. Wherfore let euery one that desireth to obtaine saluation, most diligently take heede of him and all his Apostles, no otherwise then of Satan him selfe, and his chiefe and most pernicious Apostles.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING FAITH AND DIFFIDENCE IN daunger & trouble.

Matth. 8.

Verse 23. When Iesus was entred into the ship, his Disciples followed him.

24. And

24. And behold, there aroſe a great tempeſt in the ſea, ſo that the ſhip was couered with waues but he was aſleepe.

25 Then his Diſciples came and awoke him, ſaying, Maſter, ſaue vs, we periſh.

26 And he ſayde vnto them: Why are ye feareful O ye of litle faith? Then he aroſe and rebuked the windes and the ſea: & ſo there was a great calme.

27. And the men merueiled ſaying: What man is this, that both the windes & the ſea obey him?

ACcoꝛding to the hiſtoꝛie this text ſetteth beſoꝛe vs an example of faith and diffidence: whereof we may learne both what a ſtronge and inuincible thinge faith is, and that it muſt be exerciſed & tried euen in great matters, and full of perill: and alſo howe deſperate a thing on the otherſide diffidence is, and howe full of feare and trembling, which can neuer doe any thinge rightly oꝛ wel. This doth experience moſt liuely ſet foꝛth in the Diſciples. They, when they entred into the ſhip with Chriſt, and whileſt there was calmnes in the lake, were nothing diſquieted in mind, neither felt any feare. Then if one ſhould haue aſked them whether they beleeued, they would haue aunſwered without dout that they did beleeue. Foꝛ they did not know that their hart did truſt in that quietnes, foꝛ that all troubles were abſent, and therefoꝛe did reſt vpon a thinge viſible, and not vpon the inuiſible grace of God. Which then was made manifeſt, as ſoone as the tempeſt was riſen, and the waues did couer the ſhip: foꝛ byandby all their truſt and confidence ceaſſed, foꝛ that the quietnes and calmnes whereunto they truſted was taken away, and diffidence, which beſoꝛe when al things were pꝛoſperous, did lurke in their minds, did then appeare. Foꝛ this is the nature of diffidence, that it beleeueth oꝛ knoweth no moꝛe then it feeleth. Fꝛaſmuch therefoꝛe as it had poſſeſſed the bꝛeſts of the Apoſtles, they felt nothing now but the fearefull tempeſt, and the waues couering the ſhip, they ſaw the ſea ſwelling and greatly raging to thꝛeaten nothing

How deſperate & fearefull a thinge diffidence is, it appeareth by the example of Chriſtes Diſciples.

but death. These thinges onely did they thinke vpon, these onely did they consider, and therefore could there be no measure or ende of feare and trembling in their mindes: the more they weyed in their mind the perill, so much more were they terrified, and seemed euen now to sticke in the very iawes of death, hoping for no life or deliuerance. And as they could not so much as thinke any thing els because of their vnbeliefe, so all comfort also was farre from them. For diffidence or vnbeliefe hath nothing whereunto it may trust or flee, wherefore when outward aduersitie commeth, it admitteth nothing into the mind but it, and therefore it can neuer feele any peace or quietnes while this remaineth. So in hell, where diffidence exerciseth full tyrannie, there can neuer be any intermission of desperation, trembling and terrour.

What faith doth in trouble & daunger.

But if the Disciples had bene then endued with a sound faith, and if it had ruled in this daunger, it would haue remoued from the mind the wind and all this tempest, & in steede of these would wholy haue thought vpon the power of God and his grace promised, whereunto it would no otherwise haue trusted, then if it had sate vpon a most strong rocke farre from the sea and from all tempest. For this is the chiefe vertue and cunning of faith, that it seeth those thinges, which are not seene or felt, and seeth not those thinges which are felt, yea which are now fore vpon vs, and doe presse & vrge vs. As on the contrary side diffidence seeth nothing but that which it feeleth, neither can it rest vpon any other thing but that which it feeleth. For this cause those thinges are of God layd vpon faith, which the whole world is not able to beare, as sinnes, death, the world, and the deuil: neither suffereth he it to be occupied with small matters. For who flieth not death? who is not terrified & ouercome of it? Against this inuincible faith standeth, yea it couragiously setteth vpon it, which otherwise tameth all thinges, and ouercommeth and swalloweth vp that vnsatiable deuourer of life. So euen the whole world is not able to bring vnder and subdue the flesh, but it rather bringeth vnder and maketh the world, subiect vnto it, & beareth rule ouer it, so that he liueth carnally whosoeuer is of the world. But faith subdueth this subduer of all other, holdeth it in subiection, and teacheth it not onely to be ruled, but also to obey. Likewise who is able to beare the hatred and furie, ignominie and persecution of the worlde? who doth not yeld vnto it and is oppressed with it? But faith euen

The force of faith, whereby death, the world, Satan and sinne are ouercome.

laugheth

laugheth at all the iniquitie, rage, and furie thereof, and maketh that vnto it selfe matter of spirituall ioy, wherewith other are euen killed. It doth no otherwise behaue it selfe against Satan also. Who is able to ouercome him, which practizeth so many craftes and wiles, whereby he staieth and hindereth the truth, the worde of God, faith, and hope, and soweth against them innumerable errours, sectes, delusions, heresies, desperations, superstitions, and such kind of abominations without number? All the world is to him as a sparke of fire to a Fountaine of water, it is wholy subdued vnto him in these euilles, as (alas) we both see and trie. But it is faith which troubleth him, for it is not onely not made subiect to his delusions, but it also discouereth and confoundeth them, that they be no more of any importance, that they are able to doe nothing but doe banishe away, as we haue experience at this day by the decaying and banishing of the Papacie and indulgences. Finally, sinne hath that force, that that which is euen the least, can not be appeased or extinguished of any creature, that it doth not gnawe and teare the conscience, yea if all men should goe about together to comfort the conscience wherein sinne hath begun to liue, they should goe about it in vaine. But faith is that noble Champion, which ouercommeth and extinguisheth euery sinne, yea if all the sinnes which the whole world hath committed from the beginning were layde vpon one heape, it would extinguish and abolish them all together. Is not faith therefore most mightie and of incomparable strength, which dareth encounter with so many and so mightie enemies, and beareth away the certaine victorie? Wherefore Iohn sayth in his first Epistle, Chap. 5. This is that victorie that hath ouercome this world, euen our faith.

Faith obtayneth not the victorie ouer the enemies of our soules without sore fight & conflictes.

Howbeit this victorie commeth not with rest and quietnes, we must trie the fight, not without blood and woundes, that is, we must needes feele sinne, death, the flesh, the deuill, and the world, yea and that assayling vs so grieuously and with so great force, that the hart of man doe thinke that he is past all hope, that sinne hath ouercome, and the deuill gotten the vpper hand, and on the contrary side, very litle feele the force of faith. We see an example of this fight here in the Disciples, for the waues did not onely strike the shyp, but did euen couer it, that nothing could be now loked for, but that it should be drowned, especially Christ being a-

sleepe, and knowing not of this perill: al hope was then past, life seemed to be ouercome, and death appeared to haue the victorie. But as it fell out with the Disciples in this temptation, so also doth it fall out, and must fall out with all the godly in all kinde of temptations, which are of sinne, the deuyl, and the worlde. In the temptation of sinne we must needes feele the conscience thrall vnto sinnes, the wrath of God and hellish paynes to hange ouer vs, and all thinges to be in that case, as though we were past all recouerie. Likewise when we haue conflict with the deuyll, it must appeare, as though trueth shoulde giue place to errour, and Satan should driue the worde of God out of the whole worlde, and he him selfe raigne for a God with his delusions and deceites. Neither standeth the case any otherwise, when it commeth to passe that we are tryed of the worlde, it must needes be, that it should greatly rage and cruelly persecute vs, so that it shal seeme that no man at all is able to stand, that no man is able to obtaine saftie, or professe his faith: that Cain onely shall beare rule, and suffer his brother in no place.

Albeit we be in daunger & great distres, yet must we not be discouraged, but beleeue that we shall be deliuered.

But we must not iudge according to such feeling and outward appearance of things, but according to faith. The present example ought to stirre vs vp hereunto, & to be receiued of vs in steede of speciall comfort. For we learne hereof, that albeit sinnes doe vrge vs, death disquiet vs, the worlde rage against vs, and the deuell lay snares for vs, that is, although the waues doe couer the shyp, yet we must not be discouraged. For although thy conscience being wounded doth feele sinne, and the wrath and indignation of God, yet shalt thou not therefore be plunged in hell. Neither shalt thou therefore die, although euen the whole world hate and persecute thee, and gape so wide to deuoure thee, as the morning spreadeth forth it selfe: They are onely waues, which falling vpon thy shyp do terrifie thee, and compell thee to crie out, we perish, Lord saue vs. Thou hast therefore in the former part of this text, the nature of faith set forth, how it is wont & ought to behaue it selfe in temptation, also howe desperate a thing diffidence is, and nothing to be counted of. The other part commendeth vnto vs loue in Christ, whereby he was brought so farre, that he brake of his sleepe, arose, and counted the daunger that his Disciples were in for his owne, and helped them freely, asking or looking for nothing of them therefore. Euen as it is the

nature

nature of Christian loue to doe all things freely and of good will to the glorie of God, and profit of our neighbours, seeking to it selfe nothing thereby. For the exercising of which loue man adopted of God, is left in the earth, euen as Christ being made man liued in the earth that he might do for vs, as he witnesseth of him selfe: I came not to be serued, but to serue, and to giue my life for the ransome of many. *Mat.*20.28. The nature of Christian loue.

The Allegories of this deede.

In this deede Christ hath set forth the life of Christians, and the state of such as preach and teache the worde of God. The ship signifieth the Church, the sea the world, the wind the deuill, the Disciples of Christ are the Preachers and godly Christians: Christ the truth, the Gospell and faith. Now, before that Christ and his Disciples enter into the ship, the sea is calme, & the wind quiet, but when Christ with his Disciples are entred in byandby ariseth a tempest. This is that which he sayd: I cam not to send peace but the sword. For if Christ would suffer the world to liue after his owne maner, and would not reproue the workes thereof, it would be quiet enough. But now seeing that he preacheth that they which are counted wise men, are fooles: they that are counted righteous, are sinners: they that are counted rich, are not blessed, but miserable, it rageth & is in great furie. So thou maist at this day finde wise men of this worlde, which in deede would suffer the Gospell to be preached, if the wordes of the Scripture shoulde be simply declared, and in the meane season the state of Ecclesiasticall persons not reproued: but as soone as thou shalt begin to condemne by the Scriptures all those things which haue bine hitherto brought in vnder a false name of religion, and to teach that they are to be reiected as being of no importance, thou preachest seditiously, and troublest the world with vnchristiã doctrine. *Matth.*10.34. The world can not abide the sound and sincere preaching of the Gospell.

But how doth the present text perteine vnto vs? A great tempest did arise, where that ship went, wherein Christ and his Disciples were. Other ships did passe the sea quietly, nothing tossed of the windes, this ship onely must be tossed and couered with waues, because Christ was caried in it. For the world can suffer any kind of preaching beside the preaching of Christ: the cause is, for that he condemneth all thinges of the world, and chalen- Why the world can not abide the

preaching of Christ.

geth all righteousnes to himselfe, according to that which he saith: He that is not with me, is against me: And againe: The Spirit will reproue the world of sinne, of righteousnes, and of iudgement. He sayth not: will preach, but, will reproue, and not this or that man, but, the world, and whatsoeuer is in the world. Against this ship of Christ all this tempest is raysed, and it is brought into daunger. For the world doth not suffer his owne thinges to be condemned, but Christ can not allowe them, & if he should allow them, he had come in vaine. For if the world were wise by it selfe, and did knowe and followe the truth, what neede had there bene that Christ & his Disciples should preach? Wherfore it is not a small comfort to Christians, especially to Preachers, that they are certaine before, that as soone as they shal begin to preach Christ to the world, they must suffer persecution, & that it can not be otherwise. So that it is a sure signe, and therefore to be wished, that it is true Christian preaching, if it be tried with persecution, especially of the holy, learned and wise men of the worlde. As it is an vndouted signe also, that it is vnchristian preaching, if it be praysed commonly and honored of the world, according to that saying Luke 6. Blessed are ye when men hate you, and put out your name as euill, for the Sonne of mans sake: for so did their fathers to the Prophets. Now marke how our spirituall mē do behaue themselues, and of what sort their doctrine is: They haue got into their subiection the riches, glorie, and power of the world, and they that prayse them, enioy the honour and pleasures therof, their case in all thinges agreeth with the case of the false Prophets, and yet they dare boast them selues to be Preachers and Teachers of Christ, and worshippers of God.

Matth. 12.30. *Ioh.* 16.8.

A comfort to true Preachers that they knowe before that they shal suffer persecution.

The next thinge, whereby this deede doth comfort and encourage the Preachers of Christ, is, that it sheweth where helpe is to be asked, when a tempest is risen: to wit, not of the world, for not mans wisedom or power, but Christ him selfe, and he alone is able to helpe them. Him they must cal vpon in euery distres with full confidence, in him they must trust, as his Disciples here did. For vnlesse they had beleeued that Christ was able to take away the daunger wherein they were, they would not haue awaked him, and prayd him to saue them: although their faith then was very weake, and very much diffidence was in them, for that they

Of whom the Preachers of Gods word must looke for & desire helpe in the time of trouble and persecution.

they did not confidently commit them selues with him vnto daunger, doubting nothing but he was able to deliuer them out of the middest of the Sea, and from death it selfe. Hereof therfore let it be acknowledged as certaine, that as no Iudge or Moderator can be giuen to the word of God, but God onely, so there can be had no other maintainer or defender thereof: who as he sendeth it out whether he will without any merit or counsell of men, so he alone also will defend & preserue it without the ayde or strength of men: and therfore he that seeketh ayde vnto this word of men, shall without dout fall, being forsaken as well of men as of God.

Whereas Christ did sleepe, it giueth vs to vnderstand, that in the time of persecution he doth sometimes withdrawe him selfe, & seemeth as though he slept, whiles that he giueth not strength & power valiently to resist, the peace and tranquilitie of minde being now disturbed, but suffereth vs to wrastle and labour with our infirmitie for a while, that we may acknowledge how we are altogither nothing, and that all thinges doe depend on his grace and power. As Paule confesseth of him selfe. 2. Cor. 1. that it behoued that he should be so prested and troubled out of measure, that we should not trust in our selues, but in God, which rayseth the dead. Such sleepe of God Dauid oftentimes felt, and maketh mention thereof in many places: Arise, awake, O Lord: why sleepest thou? why doost thou forget vs? &c.

Christ sometimes in the time of persecution and trouble withdraweth him self & differreth his help for a while.

In a summe, the present text offereth vnto vs two principall thinges, full of confidence and godly boldnes. The first, that when persecution is risen for the word of God, we may say: We knew that it would so come to passe. Christ is in the shyp, therefore the Sea so rageth, the windes trouble vs, the waues fall vpon vs as though they would drowne vs. But let them rage and be furious as much as they may: it is certaine, the Sea & the Windes doe obey Christ, which is the other principall thing which this text offereth. Persecution shall extend no farther, nor rage any longer then he will, and albeit the waues doe euen ouerwhelme vs, yet must they be obedient at his becke. He is Lord ouer all, wherefore nothing shall hurt vs: he onely endue vs with his grace, that we be not ouercome by vnbeliefe and so despaire, Amen.

Whereas the men merueiled and prayed the Lord, as vnto whom the Sea & Windes doe obey, it signifieth that the Gospell and word of God is so farre from being extinguished by persecu-

The Gospell is more spread a-

broad and faith increased by persecution.

tion, that thereby it is spread farther abroad, and faith also is increased and becommeth stronger. Wherein it appeareth howe diuers the nature of this diuine good thing is from the good thinges of the worlde, which decay by calamitie and misfortune, and are increased by prosperitie and fortunate affayres: But the Kingdom of Christ is increased and strengthened by tribulation and aduersitie: but is diminished and weakned by peace and tranquilitie. Whereupon Paule sayth. 2. Cor. 12. The Lordes power is made perfect through weakenes: which God performe in vs also, Amen.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHEREIN IS INTREATED OF THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN.

2. *Cor.* 6.

Verse 1. SO we therefore as workers togither beseech you, that ye receiue not the grace of God in vaine.

2. For he sayth: I haue heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of saluation haue I succoured thee: beholde nowe the accepted time, beholde nowe the day of saluation.

3. Let vs giue no occasiō of offence in any thing, that our ministerie be not reprehended.

4. But in all things let vs behaue our selues as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses.

5. In

5. In ſtripes, in priſons, in tumults, in labours.
6. In watchinges, in faſtinges, in puritie, in knowledge, in long ſuffering, in kindnes, in the holy ſpirit, in loue vnfayned.
7. In the word of trueth, in the power of God, by the armour of righteouſnes on the right hand and on the left.
8. By honour and doſhonour, by euyll report and good report, as deceiuers, and yet true:
9. As vnknowne, and yet knowne: as dying, and behold, we liue: as chaſtened, & yet not killed.
10. As ſorrowing, & yet alway reioycing: as poore, and yet make many rich: as hauing nothing, & yet poſſeſſing all thinges.

THis is an admonition and exhortation to the Corinthians, to apply them ſelues to thoſe thinges, which they did already knowe. The wordes ſurely are eaſie to be vnderſtood, but hard to be done, and in vſe moſt rare. For in ſuch merueilous order and coulours he painteth out Chriſtian life, as it can not be pleaſaunt to the fleſh to behold. Firſt he ſayth: As workers togither we beſeech you. He calleth the Miniſters of ẏ word togither workers, as. 1. Cor. 3. he alſo ſayth: We togither are Gods labourers, ye are Gods husbandrie, and Gods building. Which is thus much in effect: We preach and labour in the worde among you by teaching & exhorting, but God inwardly with his ſpirite doth bleſſe and giue the encreaſe, leaſt that ẏ outward labour in the word be in vaine. And ſo God is the inward and true Maiſter, which bringeth to paſſe all thinges, whom we ſerue in the office of outward preaching. Now he calleth himſelfe & his fellowes ſuch togither workers, leſt they ſhould contemne the outward word, as though they either had not neede of it, or had alredy ſufficiently attayned to the knowledge therof. For although God can alone by his ſpirit, without the outward word worke all things in the mindes of the elect, yet he will not doe it, but rather will vſe togither wor-

The Miniſters of the word workers togither with God.

king preachers, & worke by their word when & where it pleaseth him. Forasmuch therfore as it seemeth good vnto God to giue Preachers this office, name, & dignitie, that they be counted workers together with him, it is not lawfull for any man to chaleng either that learning or holines vnto him self, that he neglect euen neuer so simple a sermon wherein the word of God is preached, much lesse that he contemne it: for we knowe not when that time will come, when God by his Preacher will vouchsafe to accomplish his worke in vs.

The preaching of the Gospel doth not long cõtinue in one place sincere & vncorrupt

Secondly, the Apostle admonisheth of ỳ daunger of losing the light of the Gospel, when he sayth: that ye receiue not the grace of God in vaine. Wherby he giueth vs to vnderstand, that ỳ preaching of the Gospel is not a perpetuall, continuing & permanent doctrine, but rather that it is lyke raine that sodainly commeth & soone passeth away, when as the Sunne and heate come byandby and take away all the moysture that is left thereof, and afterward scorch and hurt thinges neuertheles. This very experience proueth, for no man shall be able to bring forth euen one place in the world, where the Gospell hath remained pure and sincere aboue the age of one man, but continued and increased while those lyued by whose ministerie it began, they departing hence that also almost wholy departed, and byandby after followed heretikes and false teachers, with their delusions and false doctrine peruertyng and corrupting all thinges. So Moses foretolde his Israelites, that byandby after his death it should come to passe, that they should depart from the way of the Lord, and corrupt their owne wayes, which the booke of Judges witnesseth to haue come to passe. Moreouer the same booke saith, that as often as any Judge which had called againe the word of the Lord did dye, they fell againe forthwith to their vngodlines, & made all things worse and worse. So Ioas the king continued in his duetie so long as Iehoiada the Priest liued, who being dead, he began byandby to be a King vnlike him self, & left the office of a good and godly King. Act. 20, 29. Neither fell it out otherwise after Christ had receiued his Apostles to him self, almost the whole world was filled with heresies and false doctrine. Which Paul pronounced before: I know this, sayth he, that after my departing shal grieuous Wolues enter in among you, not sparing the flocke. &c. So standeth the case at this day also, the pure and sincere Gospel hath shined vnto vs, the

day

day of grace and ſaluation, and the acceptable time are preſent but they ſhall ſhortly be ended if the world ſtand.

Moreouer, to receiue grace in vaine can be nothing els, then to heare the pure and ſincere word of God, whereby the grace of God is preached and offered, and notwithſtanding to embrace it with no diligence, neither to be chaunged or altered in life. By this vnthankfull slouthfulnes we deſerue to haue it taken away againe as being vnworthie of it. For we making ſo light of the Goſpell are vndoutedly they which are bidden and called to the mariage, but whiles being buſied about other matters we deſpiſe this grace, the good man of the houſe is angrie with vs, & ſweareth that we ſhall neuer taſt of his ſupper. The ſame doth Paule now here admoniſh of, that we take heede to our ſelues, leaſt that we receiue the Goſpell vnthankfully & without frute. Yea Chriſt alſo admoniſhed vs of the ſame: Walke while ye haue the light leaſt the darkenes come vpon you. It ought ſurely to make vs more warie and heedefull, euen for that we ſuffered ſo grieuous and pernitious darkenes vnder the Pope. But we haue now forgotten all ſuch thinges, no thankfulnes, no amendement is found among vs. which how greatly to our owne hurt we neglect, we ſhall ſhortely feele.

What it is to receiue the grace of God in vaine.

Ioh. 12. 35.

For he ſaith: I haue heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of ſaluation haue I ſuccored thee: beholde nowe the accepted time. He deſcribeth here the meruelous felicitie which is there where the Goſpell flouriſheth, there is no wrath, no reuengement, all thinges are repleniſhed with grace and ſaluation, yea it is vnſpeakeable howe great felicitie theſe wordes doe ſpeake of. Whereas he firſt ſayth: a time accepted, it is ſpoken by an Hebrewe figure, and is as much as if thou ſay: a gratious time and repleniſhed with the fauour of God, wherein God turneth away his anger, and declareth nothing but loue toward vs, and a ready will to helpe vs. Our ſinnes are blotted out, not onely thoſe that be paſt, but thoſe alſo which as yet ſticke in our fleſh, and that I may ſpeake in a word: the kingdome of mercie is preſent, wherein nothing but forgiuenes of ſinnes, and reſtoring of grace is ſhewed: heauen ſtandeth open, the right yeare of Jubile is come, wherein all dettes are remitted, and no grace is denied. Whereupon he ſayth: In a time accepted haue I heard thee, that is, now I fauour thee & am mercifull vnto thee, what

A time accepted.

ſoeuer thou wilt haue, pray for it, and thou ſhalt obtaine it, and certainly receiue it. Onely let not the fault be in thy ſelfe, praye, while this time endureth.

The day of ſaluation.

Beholde nowe the daye of ſaluation. He calleth this the time and day of ſaluation, that is of helpe and felicitie. For we are not onely certayne hereof, that God is mercifull and fauourable vnto vs, and we acceptable vnto him, but alſo as we beleeue, and by faith are ſure of his goodnes, toward vs, ſo he declareth in deede, heareth them that crie vnto him, helpeth and ſaueth them, yea and maketh them plainly bleſſed. We therefore worthely acknowledge and confeſſe this tyme to be the wiſhed, proſperous, happie, and very day of ſaluation. For it behoueth that both be togither, both that God fauour vs, and alſo that he declare his fauour towards vs by worke or deede. That he fauoureth vs, the accepted tyme which is nowe preſent doth witnes: that he doth alſo helpe vs and finiſh our ſaluation, this other witneſſeth, to wit the day of ſaluation, the day of helpe. But as the ſtate of the life of Chriſtians is, if thou wilt iudge according to the outward man, thou wilt iudge it rather a tyme of affliction, wrath and indignation, where in the Goſpell is preached, and wherein they liue, then a time of grace and ſaluation. Therefore the wordes of the ſpirit muſt be ſpiritually vnderſtood, ſo ſhall we eaſily ſee & perceiue that theſe noble and moſt pleaſaunt names doe moſt rightly and properly belong to the tyme wherein the Goſpell flouriſheth, that it is a tyme accepted, that is, full of grace, and a time of ſaluation, whereby freely all the riches and felicitie of Chriſtes kingdom are notably commended and ſet forth vnto vs.

No offence muſt be giuen whereby the Goſpell may be reprehended.

Double occaſion of offence may be giuen,

Let vs giue no occaſion of offence in any thinge. Forasmuch therefore as there is ſo acceptable and gratious a time, let vs, ſayth he, vſe it worthely, and not receiue it in vaine. Firſt endeauouring to giue no occaſion of offence to any man, leaſt that our office of preachinge Chriſt be reprehended, whereby he ſufficiently declareth what offence he meaneth, namely, that the doctrine of the Goſpell may not be ſtumbled at, as though he taught that which is not perfect and ſound. Nowe there may be giuen a double occaſion of offence, whereby the Goſpell is reprehended: one, whereby the Heathen are offended, when as ſome vnder a pretence of ỳ Goſpel ſeeke the libertie of the fleſh, wil not be

obedient

obedient to magistrates, turning the libertie of ỳ spirit, into fleshly licẽtiousnes. These do meruelously offend ỳ discreeter & wiser sort of the Heathen, and make that they hate the Gospell without a cause, which they thinke doth teach this licentiousnes: and so as it were with a certaine force they do by this their insolencie repell and driue them from the faith of Christ: for they measuring all Christians by these, do detest them as light men, and troublers of the common wealth, and therefore not to be suffered. This offence therefore, and this reprehension, or rather hatred and persecution of the Gospell we acknowledge to come through these preposterous Christians. An other offence is, whereby eũ Christians amõg themselues are sometime offended through the vnseasonable vse of all Christian libertie, in meates and other indifferent thinges, whereat the weaker sort in faith do sometime stumble. Whereof the Apostle hath giuen many preceptes 1. Cor. 8. Rom. 14. He exhorteth therefore here vnto that, whereof he admonisheth in other wordes. 1. Cor 10. So behaue your selues, that ye giue none offence, nether to the Iewes, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God: euen as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine owne profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saued. The same he teacheth also Philip. 2. that euery man looke not on his owne things, but on the things of other men, for so all offence should be easily taken awaye, nay none at all should be giuen.

whereby the Gospel is reprehended.

That our ministerie be not reprehended. Who can bring to passe that our ministerie shall not be reprehended, seeing that the Gospell is necessarily subiect to persecution, no lesse then Christ himselfe? In deede it is not in vs to make that the word of God be not reprehended and persecuted of them which are ignorannt of God, and do not beleeue: for it is a rocke of offence, Esai. 8. Rom. 9. this offence commeth because of our faith, and can not be auoided of vs, and therefore the blame thereof ought not to be layde vpon vs. Howbeit there is an other offence which proceedeth hereof, for that our loue is not sufficient dutifull, this commeth through vs, inasmuch as our workes are the cause thereof because they do not so shine by faith, that they which are conuersant with vs may thereby be prouoked to serue God, as it is meete. This offence is giuen through our fault, whom it becommeth so to liue, that the Iewes Heathen & Princes of the world

Though we cã not bring to passe that the word of God be not at all reprehended, yet must we endeuour that it be not reprehended through our fault.

might haue no occasion to say: Beholde how light and naughtie these men are, yea and verie wicked wretches, the doctrine of life which they follow must needes be euill and pestilent. So our infamie and crimes are occasion of offence to others, and of hatred and detestation of the most holy word of God. For whereas we ought so to know, preach and follow it, that thereby both our neighbours might be brought vnto God, and to the leading of a godly life, and also the glorie of God set forth, we by our naughtie and slouthfull life bring to passe that it doth not onely bring no profit and commoditie to our neighbours, but is brought into hatred and made detestable through our meanes, bearing our ignominie and reproche. Now it is a most horrible sinne and wickednes by our naughtines to make the word of God which is most holy and bringeth saluation, to make it I say, so odious, and to repell and driue men from it, to our owne, and their most certaine destruction.

But in all thinges let vs behaue our selues as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, &c. Here he describeth in order the signes & proper tokens of a Christian life, wherewith it ought to be adorned in outward conuersation: Not meaning that one is made a Christian and godly hereby, but as he sayth, that by these as by proper frutes and figures of Christianitie, we should shew our selues to be both, and behaue our selues as the ministers of God, that is as Christians & godly men. And marke well that he sayth: as the ministers of God. It may seeme very straunge, that the ministerie of God consisteth in these, in many afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in tumults, in watchinges, in fastings, &c. Among these he numbreth not Masses, and prayers for the dead, or other trifles of fained worship of God. He rehearseth those things that pertaine to the true and right seruice of God, whereby the body is chastised, and the flesh tamed. Which is well to be noted, lest that any neglect fastings, watchings and labour, and make no acount of them for that they do not iustifie. They bring not righteousnes in deede, yet are they frutes of righteousnes being obtained, wherin thou mayst be exercised, and whereby thou mayst keepe thy flesh in subiection, and enforce it to do his dutie.

In tumults. He rehearseth tumults or seditions among the rest, not that it becommeth vs to teach or moue them, who ought

to

to obey Magistrates, and with quietnes to liue obedient vnto all in that which is good, as Paule teacheth Rom. 13. and Christ Matth. 22. Giue vnto Cesar those thinges that are Cesars: but that we must beare tumultes of others, as also necessities, distresses, stripes, and imprysonmentes, which we must cause or procure vnto none, but suffer being procured and layde vpon vs by others. Wherefore in the first place he setteth much patience, which surely moueth no sedition or tumult, but rather suffereth it, and appeaseth it, if it can. But in the meane season it singularly comforteth vs at this time, when as tumultes are commonly imputed vnto vs, for that this is incident to a Christian life, that for the preaching of the Gospell it is accused to raise sedition, which it rather suffereth being raised of other against the worde of God. For as in time past Achab accused the most holy Prophet Elias of sedition, affirming that it was he that troubled Israell, when as he himselfe in deede did trouble it: so is it neither a shamefull nor new thing, for vs to be accused of the same, when we preach the same word. Let vs thinke when the enemies of God lay this reproche and sclaunder vpon vs, that not onely Elias, not onely the Apostles, but Christ himselfe was counted of the Iewes a seditious felow, & crucified, a title being writtē in three languages and put on the crosse, that he should of all be counted as a seditious king of the Iewes, which would haue moued that people against Cesar, and adioyned them to himselfe, who in deede by word & example of his life taught nothing more then submission and obedience, and liued so that he was ready to profite and minister vnto all. As for the rest whereof the Apostles here maketh mention, as patience, affliction, necessitie, distres, stripes, prisons, labour, watchinges, fasting, puritie: it is easie to vnderstand how they pertaine to the ministerie of God, who truely disdaineth to haue slouthfull, idle, gluttonous, and drowsie Ministers, and such as can not abide aduersitie and trouble. But he specially reproueth our delicate ones, which quietly enioy reuenues and rentes, and take their delight and pleasure, thinking that it is an vnworthy thing that they shoulde labour, for they are shauen, weare long gownes, and crie out in temples, &c. Howbeit these shall not be able to approue themselues before God, who will haue all to labour, and eate their owne and not other mens bread, as it is written by Paule to the Thessalonians. Who therefore

Christians commonly accused to raise sedition and tumults, when they suffer the same being raysed of other.

God will haue none to be idle, but all to labour,

and so eate their owne bread.

teacheth here also, that God is serued by labour, and not that onely, but that we also are thereby proued and commended to be the ministers of God.

In knowledge. Paule taketh knowledge here for that which we call prudence or wisedom, wherby we vse things with reason, behauing our selues with discretion and comelines. Of which knowledge ỳ saying also of Paule Rom. 10. is vnderstood: They haue the zeale of God, but not according to knowledge, that is, they beare a zeale to the Lawe not prudently, not weying and considering all things wel, that they might do no vndecent thing.

Christians must frame their life prudently & with sufficiẽt discretion.

Wherefore whereas he here expressely requireth knowledge in the ministerie of God, he thereby admonisheth vs, that we frame our life with reason, and order it prudently, in all thinges keeping a meane, and hauing an aduised regard of our neighbours, least that in any thing we offende ỳ weaker sort, with vnseasonable vse of Christian libertie, and that we do al thinges to the edifying of all. So we must labour, fast, watch, and applie our selues to chastitie, and such other thinges, not aboue measure, that either the body may be in daunger by too much honger and watching, or the true puritie of life by ouermuch abstinence from matrimoniall companie, but we must vse these thinges with knowledge, that is with conuenient wisedome and discretion, that they may not any whit hurt, but alwayes edifie. Whereupon Paule. 1. Cor. 7. expressely admonisheth maried folkes, that they abstaine not ouermuch from mutuall companie, least that they be tempted of Satan. In all these therefore, in fastings, watchings, labours, chastitie. &c: the Apostle would prescribe and appoynt no rule, lawe, or measure, which the counsels of the Pope and Monkes doe, but the meane or measure to be obserued in them be left free to euery mans knowledge and discretion, that euery one may consider with himselfe how much or long he must labour, fast, watch, or abstaine, to this ende that the flesh may be tamed and made obedient to the spirit.

In long suffering, in kindnes, in the holy Spirit. What the two former are, the Apostle hath at large sufficiently declared Rom. 2. Gal. 5. But whereas he sayth: In the holy Spirit, it may be vnderstood after two sortes, either that he speaketh of ỳ holy Ghost, God himselfe, or that he meaneth by the holy spirit the true force and maner of a spirituall life, as though he would admonishe in this

this maner: Beware of an hypocritical spirit, which wil be counted for a holy spirit through a meruelous shew and craftie counterfaiting of ritual thinges, when it is in deede an vncleane, prophane, and an euyll spirit, and bringeth in nothing but sectes and heresies. But liue ye in the true & holy spirit which is giuen of God, which giueth and maintaineth vnitie, one minde, hart, and affection, whereof he speaketh also Eph. 4. Endeuour to keepe the vnitie of the spirit in the bond of peace. They therefore which perseuer in the same true faith, minde and sentence, behaue themselues as the ministers of God in the holy spirite, being truely spirituall, and liuing a spirituall life. For a sincere spirituall life, which is led by the assistaunce of the holy spirit of God, is also led in the vnitie of mindes, the hartes by faith being affected after the same sort. A true spirituall life.

In loue vnfained, in the word of trueth. As he set the holy spirit against heretikes and false Prophetes, so he setteth vnfained loue against slouthfull and sluggish Christians, who albeit they haue the same meaning and minde in the true spirituall life, as concerning opinions of doctrine, yet are they remisse, colde and faint in loue. So he setteth the word of trueth against them which abuse the word of God, and interpret it according to their owne affectiõs, that thereby they may get them a name and profit. For as false spirits do contemne the word of the Scripture, and preferre themselues before it: so these do in deede boast of the word, and wil be counted maisters of the Scripture, but by their interpretations do peruert the sense and meaning thereof. Against these Peter speaketh: If any man speake, let him speake as the wordes of God, that is, let them take heede that he be certaine that those wordes which he speaketh, be the wordes of God, and not his owne vaine imagination. Now Paule calleth that here the word of trueth, which is the sincere word of God, not which is vnsincere & fained, which for asmuch as it is ours, is falsly called the word of God. For that which we call the true & right word, the Hebrewes call the word of trueth. The word of trueth.

In the power of God. Of this power Peter also speaketh. 1. Pet. 1. If any man minister, let him do it as of the abilitie which God ministreth. And Paule Coloss. 1. Whereunto I also labour and striue, according to his working, which worketh in me mightely. Againe Rom. 15. I dare not speake of any thing which In spirituall functions & matters of saluation we must do nothing but

that which we are certaine that god worketh by vs.

Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, &c. Christians must be certaine that they are the kingdome of God, and do nothing at all, especially in spirituall functions, and those thinges that pertaine to the saluation of soules, whereof they are not certaine, that it is not they which worke, but God that worketh by them. For in the kingdome of God it is meete, that God alone do speake, commaund, do, dispose, and worke all thinges. This Christ ment when he said Matth. 5. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen, as the author of them, which doth them and not you.

By the armour of righteousnes on the right hand, and on the left, by honour and dishonour. &c. This armour he describeth more at large in the Epistle to the Ephesians & Thessalonians. He rehearseth there the girdle of veritie, the breast plate of righteousnes, the shooes of preparation to preach the Gospell, the shilde of faith, the helmet of saluation. &c. This armour of righteousnes, he calleth in his Epistle to the Ephesians, the armour of God, both are to this ende, that he may turne Christians from corporall and prophane armour, and admonish them, that they are a spirituall people, and therefore must be furnished with spirituall armour, wherewith they must alwayes fight a spirituall fight with spirituall enemies, which here he rehearseth, and sheweth that they do assaile vs both on the right hand and on the left. On the left hand he setteth dishonour, euell report, and that we are counted as deceiuers, vnknowne, dying, chastened, sorrowing, poore, hauing nothing. For all these thinges come vnto Christians, they are openly defamed, being reproched to their face, and by infamie falsly accused and railed on, counted as deceiuers and followers of most wicked trades. They are as vnknowne although noble, all refusing to be friendes with them because of the perilous confession of the name of Christ, yea it manie times commeth to passe, that they that were their most familiar friendes are ashamed of them, for that they haue so euell a report, and are very ill spoken of among the chiefe, richest, wisest, and mightiest of the world. They are dying, that is, as sheepe appointed to the slaughter, they looke for death euery moment, by reason of the great hatred and enuie which the euell beare toward them, being alwayes persecuted of the chiefe of the world.

The spiritual armour of a Christian.

The enimies of Christians which assaile them on the left hand.

They

They are chastised, for it oftentimes falleth out that they are stricken and beaten, and do by other discomodities trie how they are enuied of the world, and how great indignation the mightie of the world beare against them. They are as sorowing, for all outward thinges are against them, and the whole world giueth many causes of griefes vnto them. They are as poore, for there is no man of the world which will giue them any thing, euerie man is ready to hurt and endamage them. Neither do they possesse any thinge, for although all thinges be not taken from them at once, yet are they in that state that they dayly looke for it. Against these aduersities & as enemies assayling vs on the left hãd, it is needful ỳ we be fortified & fensed with the armour of God, lest that we either despaire or faint. Now this armour is a sure and inuincible faith, continuall consolation and exhortation of the word of God, and a liuely hope and vndouted expectation of the helpe of God. When being furnished with these, we suffer all thinges patiently, standing stedfast in our dutie, we declare our selues the syncere ministers of God, which the false Apostles and hypocrites can neuer do, although they faine that they serue God.

The armour of God.

On the right hand he setteth glorie, praises, that we are counted true, knowne, do liue, are not killed, do reioyce, enriching many, possessing all thinges. For it alwayes falleth out, that there be some which make account of Christians, and reuerence them among whom they are well reported of, and counted true in doctrine, wherefore some are not wanting which ioyne them selues vnto them, and do openly pretend friendship with them, freely pronouncing them to be the ministers of God. Neither do they die so oft as they are brought into daunger, and being chastened are not alwayes killed. Finally it commeth to passe by the consolation of the spirit, that they do then most of all reioyce, when they are in greatest affliction. For their hart reioyceth in God, which ioy bursteth forth, and vttereth it selfe in words, workes, and gestures. And albeit they be poore in corporall substaunce, yet are they neuer famished with hunger, but with the word of God do enrich verie many in spirit, & stand not in neede of any thing, although they haue nothing, for all thinges are in their handes, for that all creatures must serue the beleeuers, as Christ sayth: To him that beleeueth all thinges are possible.

Where against Christiãs must be defended with spirituall armour on the right hand.

These things albeit they be the excellent giftes of God, notwithstanding if the feare of God should be absent, euen they should be turned into enemies vnto vs, and therfore it is needefull that we be strongly fenced against them with the armour of God, lest that they make vs waxe proud, or insolently puffe vs vp. A Christian man therfore is meruellously free, and addicted to nothing but to God alone, he setteth God only before his eyes, he endeuoureth to come straight vnto him by the middle and hie way, betweene those thinges which assaile on the right hand and on the left, so that he is neither throwen downe by aduersitie, nor puffed vp by prosperity, but vseth both most rightly, both to the glorie of God and profit of his neighbours. We must, sayth the Apostle, liue such a life, while it is the time of grace and of the liuely light of the Gospell, lest that while this daye shineth we worke not, and that shall haue shined vnto vs in vaine. This is the true ministerie of God which onely he alloweth, wherein he graunt that we may serue him, and that most dutifully, Amen.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING TENTATION.

Matth. 4.

Verse 1. THen was Iesus led aside of the spirit into the wildernes to be tempted of the Deuell.

2. And whē he had fasted fortie daies and fortie nights, he was afterward hungrie.

3. Then came to him the tempter & said, if thou be the sonne of God commaund that these stones be made bread.

4. But

4. But he aunſwering, ſayd, it is written: Man ſhall not liue by bread onely, but by euery word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
5. Then the Deuyll tooke him vp into the holy Citie, and ſet him on a pinnacle of the Temple,
6. And ſayd vnto him: If thou be the Sonne of God, caſt thy ſelf downe: for it is written, that he will giue his Angels charge ouer thee, & with their hãdes they ſhal lift thee vp, leſt at any time thou ſhouldeſt daſh thy foote againſt a ſtone.
7. Ieſus ſayd vnto him, it is written againe: Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
8. Againe the Deuyll toke him vp into an exceeding high moũtaine, & ſhewed him al the kingdomes of the world, and the glorie of them.
9. And ſayd to him: All theſe will I giue thee, if thou wilt fall downe, and worſhip me.
10. Then ſayd Ieſus vnto him, Auoyde Satan, for it is written: Thou ſhalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou ſerue.
11. Then the Deuyll left him: and behold, the Angels came, and miniſtred vnto him.

THis text hath therefore bin appointed to be redde in the beginning of ẏ ſolemne faſt, which hath hitherto bin commaunded for fourtie dayes, that the example of Chriſt being commẽded to Chriſtians, they might thereby be prouoked to keepe that faſt ſo much more religiouſly, which ſurely was nothing but a vaine trifle. Firſt, for that no man is able to follow ẏ example of Chriſt, who liued without any meate, fourtie dayes, and ſo many nights. Chriſt rather folowed the example of Moſes herein, then gaue vnto vs any example to follow. Moſes receiued the Lawe, was fortie dayes & fortie nights in the mount Sinai without meat: ſo long time would Chriſt alſo faſt, cõming to bring & publiſh a new Law. Again, this faſting is a peruerſe thing, inaſmuch as it was

ordained of men. For albeit Christ fasted fortie dayes, yet haue we no worde of his whereby he hath commaunded vs also to doe the same. He did many other thinges besides, notwithstanding he will not haue vs also to doe them: those thinges that he hath commaunded vs to do, those thinges, I say, we must endeuour to doe, that thereby we may obey his wil. But the most pestilent thing of all herein was, that we tooke vpon vs, and vsed fasting as a good and meritorious worke, not to tame the flesh thereby, but to satisfie for sinnes, and to procure the fauour of God vnto our selues. Which wicked opinio made our fasting so foule, filthie, and abominable before God, that no feastinges, bankets, gluttonie, and dronkennes are so filthie and detestable before him, & it were better to drinke & bibbe day and night, then so to fast. And although this vngodly & wicked intent had not defiled our fasting, but that it had bin ordained for chastising the body, neuertheles forasmuch as it was not left free, that euery one might haue taken it vpon him of his owne accord, but was enforced by the lawes of man, so that most which fasted, fasted against their willes, and with a grudging minde, it could not be but vaine and vnacceptable to God. I speake not what other hurt it did to women with childe, in young children, in the weake and aged. Wherefore we will more rightly consider this text, and see what maner of fasting it teacheth by the example of Christ.

A most wicked abuse of fasting.

Fasting must be left free.

The Scripture commendeth vnto vs two sorts of fasting which are laudable: one, which is taken vpon vs of our owne accord, to tame the flesh, whereof the Apostle speaketh. 2. Cor. 6. where he exhorteth vs to behaue our selues as the Ministers of God, by labours, watchinges, & fastings among the rest. An other, which in deede is not taken vpon vs willingly, yet is willingly borne of vs, when by reason of neede and pouertie we haue not whereon to feede. Whereof Paule speaketh also in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the fourth chapter: Vnto this houre we both hunger and thirst. And Christ Matth. 9. When the Bridegrome shalbe taken from them, then shal they fast. This fasting Christ teacheth vs by his present example, who being alone in the desart and hauing no meate, did suffer that hunger and neede patiently. The first of these two fastes may when we please be left and broken with eating of meate: but this last must be suffered vntill the Lord ende and breake it.

Two sorts of fasting, which are allowable and to be commended.

Now

Nowe the cause why the Euangelist did so diligently first declare, that Iesus was led aside of the spirit into the wildernes, that he should there fast and be tempted, is this: lest that any taking vpon him to fast of his owne mynde, and for his owne commodities sake, should in vaine endeuour to follow this example of Christ. For he must looke for the leading aside of the spirite, he will cause fasting and tentation enough: for he that without the leading aside of the spirit, should voluntarily bringe himselfe into daunger of hunger, or any other tentation, when by the blessing of God he hath what to eate and drinke, and whereby to liue quietly, he, I saye, should plainely tempt the Lorde. We must not procure to our selues pouertie and tentation, they will come soone enough of themselues, onely when they are sent of the Lorde we must endeuour to beare them patiently. Iesus, as the Euangelist wrighteth, was let aside of the Spirit into the wildernes, he did not choose to himselfe the wildernes. They are led with the Spirit of God, which are the sonnes of God, Romans 8. The good thinges which the Lorde giueth, he giueth for this, that we may enioye them with thankes giuing, not that we should neglect them, tempting him.

We must not procure tentation to our selues, but patiently suffer it when it pleaseth the Lord to send it.

Moreouer, this historie is written vnto vs both to instruct, and also to exhort. To instruct, that we may learne hereby, that Christ by this his fasting, hunger, tentation and victorie against Satan did serue vs, & furthered our saluation: that whosoeuer beleeueth in him, may neuer needs, or be hurt by any tentation, but rather shall abound with good thinges in the middes of pouertie, and be safe in the middes of tentation, for that his head and Lord Christ hath ouercome all these thinges for him, whereof by fayth he is most certaine, according as ꝑ Lord himselfe sayth Ioh. 16. Be ye of good comfort, I haue ouercome the world. And if God could without meat nourish his Christ fortie dayes & so many nights, so he can also Christians. We are exhorted also here, that according to this example of Christ, we suffer hunger, tentation, and other necessities whē they come, and when the case so requireth, to the glorie of God & profit of our neighbours. And surely if we do earnestly confesse and sticke to the word of God, these things will vndoutedly come vnto vs. The present text therefore containeth a meruelous consolation and strengthening of faith, against

The historie of Christes tentation cōtaineth both instruction & exhortation.

the filthy and incredulous belly, which being diligently and faithfully weyed, our conscience shalbe verie much comforted and strēgthned, that we may not be carefull for liuing, but trust with a full confidence, that God will giue vs plentifully those thinges that be necessarie. Now, that this tentation also is incident vnto vs it is manifest. For as Christ was led aside into the wildernes, that is, was left alone of God, Angels, men, and all creatures, which might helpe him: so also falleth it out with vs. We are led aside into the wildernes, we are forsaken and left alone. And this in deede is it, which especially grieueth vs, to feele or perceiue nothing whereunto we may trust, or from whence we may looke for helpe. As when it lieth vpon me to prepare sustenance for me and mine, and I haue nothing at all of my selfe, neither perceiue any helpe comming from any man, neither know where to looke for any. This is to be led aside into the desert, and to be left alone, I being in this case, am in the true exercise of faith, then I learne how I my selfe am nothing, howe weake my fayth is, how great and rare a thing sounde faith is, and howe deepe abominable incredulitie is setled in the harts of all. But he that hath as yet a purse heauie with money, a seller ful of wine, a garnar replenished with graine, he is not yet led aside into the wildernes, or left alone, and therefore can not feele tentation while these thinges remaine.

How we are sometime led aside into the wildernes.

Secondly, Satan commeth, and tempteth Christ with this care for the bellie, and diffidence of the goodnes of God, saying: If thou be the Sonne of God, commaund that these stones be made bread. As if he should say according to ỳ Dutch prouerbe: Trust in God, and in the meane season neglect to bake bread. Tarie till a rosted chicken flie into thy mouth. Go now, and say that thou hast a God, who is carefull for thee. Where is nowe that thy heauenly Father, who hath so great a care of thee? Hath he not goodlily forsaken thee? Eate now and drinke of thy faith, and let vs see how thou shalbe sufficed: it were well with thee, if thou couldest feede on stones. What a goodly sonne of God art thou? How fatherly doth he behaue himselfe toward thee? He sendeth thee not so much as a peace of breade, but suffereth thee here to be pined with hunger. Go now, and beleeue yet that thou art the sonne of God, and he thy Father. Surely with these and such like cogitations he tempteth all the children of God, which

Satan tempteth Christ with care for the belley & diffidence of Gods goodnes.

Christ

Chriſt alſo vndoutedly felt, for he was not a blocke or ſtone, but verie man, although pure from ſynne, as he alſo continued, which is not giuen vnto vs. Now that the Deuel tempted Chriſt with care of the bellie, diffidence and wicked deſire, the anſwere of Chriſt doth ſufficiently declare: Man liueth not by breade alone. Which is as much as if he had ſaid: Thou wilt haue me haue regard to breade alone, thou dealeſt with me, as though I ought to haue no other care but of meate and foode for the bellie. This tentation is verie common, euen among men that are of the moſt perfect ſort, but they eſpecially feele it, which when they are poore, haue notwithſtanding a wife and children to nouriſh and maintaine, and therewithall an emptie houſe. Hereupon Paule calleth couetouſnes the roote of all euels, for that it is the right ofſpring of diffidence. And what thinge els, but this diffidence and care of the bellie, is the cauſe that many are ſo loath to marie? what els doth hold ſo many thouſand men in whoredom & vnchaſt liuing, and detaineth them from matrimonie, but this immoderate care of the bellie, and vngodly feare leſt they ſhould be pined and periſh with hunger? But the preſent deede and example of Chriſt ſhould be thought vpon, who although he had bene without meate fortie dayes and ſo many nights, yet was he not quite forſaken and left deſtitute, but the Angels at the laſt came, and miniſtred all thinges neceſſarie vnto him.

An vſuall thinge to be tẽpted with care for the belly.

Thirdly, we may ſee here how Chriſt meeteth with this tentation of the belly, and ouercommeth it. He ſeeth nothing in deede but ſtones and that which can not be eaten, therefore from thoſe thinges that were before his eyes he remoueth his minde to the worde of God, thereby both ſtrenghthening himſelfe, and ouerthrowing the Deuell. On which word Chriſtians, eſpecially when pouertie preſſeth them, and all thinges ſeeme to be turned into ſtones, and the minde doth nowe tremble for feare of hunger: ought with a ſtrong faith to lay hold, and anſwere the tentation that would quite diſcourage thē: What if the whole world were full of bread? yet doth not man liue by bread alone, there is neede of an other thinge, that is of the word of God. Now foraſmuch as theſe wordes are of meruelous force and efficacie, we muſt a litle ſtand vpon them, and endeuour to declare them, & not lightly paſſe them ouer. Theſe wordes therefore Chriſt tooke out of

How Chriſtians when they are tempted with pouertie and neede muſt comfort thẽſelues, & ouercome the tentation.

the fift booke of Moſes chap.8. where Moſes ſpeaketh thus vn-
Deut 8.3. to the Iſraelites: The Lord thy God humbled thee, and ſuffered thee to hunger, and feed thee with Manna, which neither thou nor thy fathers knew of, to make thee know that a man doth not liue by bread only, but by euerie word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. Which is as much as if he had ſaid: Whereas he ſuffered thee to hunger, and yet thou didſt not periſh, thou mayeſt thereby eaſily know, that it is God which ſuſtaineth thee by his word euen without bread. For if we did liue and were nouriſhed by bread alone, it were neceſſarie that we ſhould be alwayes filled with bread. But it is the word of God that nouriſheth vs, which he will haue preached, that we may knowe that he is our God, and that he will ſhew himſelfe bountifull and gra-
He that beleueth in the word of God ſhall both be ſuſtained in the time of hunger, and at the laſt aſſuredly haue foode ſufficient.
cious vnto vs. We are taught therefore by this aunſwere of Chriſt, and teſtimonie of Moſes, that he which beleeueth in the word of God, ſhall vndoutedly haue experience of two thinges. Firſt, that when meate is wanting, and he is pinched with hunger he is as well ſuſtained and ſtrengthned by this word, that he die not or periſh with hunger, as if he might abundantly enioye meate, this word of God, which he obtaineth in heart, nouriſhing and ſtrengthening him without meat and drinke. And if he haue but a litle meat, he ſhall perceiue that litle, although it were but euen one peece of breade, to feede and nouriſh him no leſſe, then if he did enioy princely fare. For not by bread, but by the word of God the body is nouriſhed and preſerued, like as by it it was made, as alſo all other thinges, like as by the word they were created, ſo alſo by it are they preſerued. The other thing, which we are here taught that the beleeuer ſhall haue experience of, is, that at the length he ſhall aſſuredly receiue bread, from whence ſo euer it come, yea although it ſhould raine downe from heauen, as Manna did to the Iſraelites, in a place where no other breade could be gotten. Let a Chriſtian quietly promiſe to himſelfe and looke for theſe two thinges, his hope can not be fruſtrate, either he ſhall haue in hunger ſomewhat to eate from whence ſoeuer it be giuen him, or his hunger ſhalbe made ſo tolerable vnto him, that he ſhalbe no leſſe fedde, then if he were fedde with breade, the power of the word of God nouriſhing and ſuſtaining him. Thoſe thinges that I haue ſayd of breade that is, of meat, are alſo to be vnderſtood of drinke, apparell,

houſe,

house, and all thinges necessarie vnto this life.

It may be in deede that a godly man do neede apparrell, or an house. &c. but at length he shall haue them. The leaues falling from the trees shall sooner be turned into coates and clokes, then we can be left naked, or surely those garmentes which we haue shall not waxe olde, which the Israelites tried, whose clothes and shooes in the desart were not torne, as also a most wide wildernes was vnto them in steede of houses, places vnpassable, passable, vnwaterie, waterie, finally the stone rockes, fountaines of water. For the worde of God standeth sure and vnmoueable: The Lord is carefull for vs. And Paule sayth: God giueth vs aboundantly all thinges to enioy. Also Christ sayth Matth. 6. Seeke first the kingdome of God, and all thinges shalbe ministred vnto you, onely be carefull for nothing. Such wordes and promises of God must needes remaine true for euer, and therefore no good thing can be wanting to them that beleeue. This euen dayly experience may teach vs. We see commonly poore folkes and their children to be better liking then many rich folkes and their children, for that the vse of their small sustenaunce is by the blessing of God encreased, and doth much more feede and nourish them, then all that most aboundant substaunce doth feede and nourish the rich. Now, whereas the wicked do sometime suffer neede, or in the time of famine some do euen dye through hunger, that is the speciall vengeance of God, as is also the pestilence, warre, and such like. Otherwise it plainely appeareth, that not meate, but God doth feede and sustaine vs.

Singular comfort against pouertie and neede.

1. Pet. 5. 7.

1. Tim. 6. 17.

Howbeit whereas God feedeth the world with bread, and not with his worde alone without bread, he therefore doth it, that he may so hide his worke, and exercise our faith. So he commaunded the Israelites, that they should prepare them selues to battaile, and yet he would not haue the victorie to be gotten by their sword and labour: but he himselfe would by meanes of their sword and labour, ouercome and vanquish the enemies. Here also it might be said, that the souldier doth slaie and ouercome the enemie, not by his sworde alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Whereupon Dauid sayth Psal. 44. I will not trust in my Bow, it is not my Sword that can saue me. And againe. He is not delighted in any mans legges: a man of great might is not deliuered by much strength: a Horse is but a

It pleaseth God to work by ordinarie meanes, yet of no necessitie.

Psal. 147. 10.

vaine thing to saue a man. &c. Neuertheles God vseth men, swoordes, horses, and bowes, howbeit not by the power and strength of them, but by them as by certaine meanes or instrumentes, he himselfe fighteth & ouercometh. This he hath sufficiently declared oftentimes, when he hath ouerthrowen the enemies, and deliuered his people, which surely he dayly doth, when the case so requireth. After the same sort God vseth bread also, by it, forasmuch as it is made for that vse, he feedeth vs, howbeit when it is wanting, he neuertheles feedeth them that be his, euen by his word, without bread, as he doth at other times by bread, so that bread doth as it were worke vnder God, as the Apostles and Preachers of the word in spirituall and euangelicall meate serue vnder him, as it is mentioned. 1. Cor. 3. For as God vseth their ministerie to teache men, he himselfe by his spirite speaking in their hartes through it, and doing all thinges alone, which he both is able to doe, and often times wont to doe without the ministerie of the Preachers of his word, although he will not in the meane season haue the ministerie of his to be despised, and so himselfe tempted: so to the nourishyng of our outwarde man, he outwardly vseth bread, although he doth make by his word inwardly, that we be nourished and strengthened, which he can as well doe, and is wont to doe when bread is away, that all our nourishment may be attributed to the word, and not to bread, which he vseth as an instrument, but yet of no necessitie. That I may speake briefly, all creatures doe as it were serue vnder him, and are his instrumentes, without which notwithstanding he is able, and often times wont to worke: by this meanes prouiding, that we may depend on his word alone, neither trusting more vnto him, when we haue bread and other thinges which our life vseth, neither lesse when we want them, but may vse them with giuing of thankes when he bestoweth them vpon vs, when otherwise, may patiently be without them, being certaine neuertheles, that we shall liue and be nourished in both times, both when we haue them, and when we haue them not. And by this faith that vaine and vngodly care of the bellie, greedy desire of thinges, and carefulnes of life are ouercome.

A similitude.

Then the Deuyll tooke him vp into the holy Citie. &c. This temptation is quite contrarie to the former. He assaileth vs with such temptation also, wherby he goeth about to moue vs to tempt

Temptation whereby we are moued to

God, euen as he willeth Christ to cast himselfe downe from a pinnacle of the temple, and so tempt God, when there were ladders, by which he might descend. And that this temptation prouoketh to tempt God, it is manifest euen by the aunswere of Christ, who aunswereth Satan in this maner: It is written: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Hereby he signifieth, that the Deuyll would prouoke him to tempt God. Now this temptation doth not amis folow the former. For when the Deuyll perceiueth the hart, that in pouertie and necessitie it trusteth in God, he byandby maketh an end of tempting by care of the bellie & desire of things, as being weaker then that by it he may ouerthrow one so stronge in faith. He thinketh therefore with him selfe: If he professe him selfe to be of so religious and assured a minde, I will on this side also giue occasion to sinne. And so he setteth vpon him on the right side, affirming that that is to be beleeued, which the Lord hath neither spoken, nor commaunded to be beleeued. As is this: If he should bring thee to such madnes, that when thou hast bread at home giuen thee of God, as he of his goodnes giueth vnto vs euery day, thou wouldest not vse it, but wouldest procure to thy selfe necessitie and hunger, saying: I must trust in God, I wil not feede on this earthly bread, I will tarie tyll God giue me other from heauen. This were to tempt God. For he doth not commaunde thee to beleeue, that that thing shal come vnto thee wherof thou hast neede, if it be already come of his liberalitie. For why shouldest thou beleeue that he will giue that, which thou hast already of his gift? Thou seest therefore that the Deuyl doth here obiect a certaine necessitie and neede vnto Christ, where there is none. For there was a sufficient meane to descende from the pinnacle of the temple, neither was it reason to attempt this newe vnaccustomed and vnnecessarie meane whereunto Satan perswaded.

tempt God with presumptuous confidence.

Moreouer allegorically we may by this doing of Satan perceiue his craft and suttletie. He tooke Iesus, sayth the Euangelist, into the holy Citie, and set him on a pinnacle of the Temple. By this temptation he replenisheth men with cogitations that seeme most holy, that they may thinke them selues most plentifully endued with faith, and to stande in a very holy place, when as notwithstanding they are set not in the Temple, but on the Temple, that is, not in the synceritie of faith, but in a vayne

Satan tempteth men vnto hypocriticall holines.

outward shew of faith. Neuertheles he is in the meane season in ỳ holy citie, because that this kind of men is wont to be no where but among Christians, where the word of the Lord and the preaching of faith is dayly heard, who also like vnto Satan, haue sentences of Scripture in a readines as concerning the wordes, although they alwayes peruert & wrest them to their owne errour and false imaginations. So Satan recited here vnto Christ out of the. 91. Psalme, that God doth commaunde his Angels concerning his children, that they keepe them, lifting them vp with their hands. But the deceiuer concealed that which is added, that is, in their wayes. For thus hath the Psalme: He will giue his Angels charge ouer thee, to keepe thee in all thy wayes. &c. So that the custodie of Angels is not by the commaundement promised vnto vs, vnles we walke in our wayes which he hath prescribed vs. If we walke in them, we shall assuredly be kept of Angels. Howbeit the Deuill saith nothing of ỳ wayes of the Lord, but promiseth by corrupting the saying of the Psalme, that it is commaunded to the Angels, to keepe vs in what wayes soeuer, whereof the Lord hath commaunded nothing. And this is Satans seducing, and persuasion to tempt God.

Psal. 91.11.

But this temptation doth not easily happen in these outwarde thinges, as are bread, apparrell, houses. &c. Thou mayst finde in deed some rash heades, which for no cause do put their life, goods, & good name in great daunger, as they doe which goe on warfare of their owne accord, which leape rashly into most deepe waters, or go voluntarily into other no small daungers. Of whom Jesus the sonne of Syrach sayth: He that loueth perill, shall perish in it. Whereof the Germanes haue a prouerbe: Selfe do, selfe haue: what euery one followeth, that he commeth vnto. So is it almost vsuall, that none are oftner drowned, then they that are most exercised in swimming, and none fal more perilously, then they which vse to attempt high matters. But he shall be hardly found, which hauing a false and ouermuch confidence in God, attempteth any such thing, or vseth not the thinges present, as bread, apparell, house, and such like, loking with perill, while God prouide otherwise for him by miracle. We read of a certaine Heremite, who because he had vowed to take bread of no man, brought him selfe into perill by hunger, and so perished, and vndoutedly went strait vnto hell, because of that false faith and tempting of God, which

Eccle. 3.27.

We are seldō brought to tēpt God by not taking the vse of outward things which he hath giuen vs.

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he learned no other where but of ỳ deuill, ſo that his madnes was altogither like that, wherunto Satan here perſwadeth Chriſt, to wit, that he ſhould caſt him ſelfe downe from a pinnacle of the temple. Howbeit thou ſhalt finde very few which doe follow this Heremite, and doe differre to enioy corporall thinges preſent for that they hope that God will giue them other from heauen.

But in ſpirituall things, which concerne the nouriſhment, not of the body, but of ỳ ſoule, this tentation is wont to be both mighty and often. In theſe God hath appointed a certaine maner, whereby the ſoule may be fedde, nouriſhed and ſtrengthened, both moſt commodiouſly, and alſo moſt bleſſedly, ſo that no good thing at all can be wanting vnto it. This nouriſhment, this ſtrength, this ſaluation, is Chriſt our Sauiour, in whom the Father hath moſt abundantly offered and giuen all good thinges. But there are very few which deſire him, the moſte parte ſeeke ſome other where, whereby their ſoules may liue, & obtaine ſaluation. Such are all they which ſeeke ſaluation by their workes. Theſe are they whom Satan hauing ſette one a pinnacle of the temple, biddeth them caſt them ſelues downe, and they obey him. They deſcende where as is no way: that is, they beleeue and truſt in God, yet ſo, as they truſt alſo in their owne workes, in which is no place at all for faith and truſt, no way or path vnto God, wherefore throwing them ſelues downe headlong, they breake their necke, falling into vtter deſperation.

We are eaſily and often by the tentation of Satan brought to refuſe the true ſpirituall foode of our ſoules, and to ſeeke other, contrary to the will and word of God

Now Satan perſwadeth miſerable men vnto this madnes, as alſo he perſwaded Chriſt to caſt him ſelfe downe from a pinnacle of the temple, by places of Scripture peruerted and miſapplied, wherein workes are commaunded, whereby he maketh them beleeue, that the Angells ſhall keepe them, that is, that they ſhall be approued of God, when as in deede they can by nothing ſo offend him, as by that madde truſt and confidence in workes. For they acknowledge not, ỳ the Scripture doth no where require workes without faith, or that it doth euery where require a ſound & liuely faith from which workes proceede. We haue at large declared who are ſuch, namely, incredulous hypocrites, which are giuen to workes without faith, which falſely boaſt of the name of Chriſtians, chalenging to them ſelues to be chiefe in ỳ flock of Chriſt: For this tentation muſt be in the holy citie. Now theſe two tentations, and the cauſes of them doe greatly differ. In the former

the cauſe why men doe not beleeue is neede and hunger, for they are thereby moued to diſtruſt God, and deſpaire of his goodnes. In the latter the cauſe why they doe not beleeue is ouermuch abundance, for that miſerable men are full of moſt plentifull and abundant treaſure, ſo that they loath it, coueting to haue ſome other ſpeciall thinge, whereby they may procure the ſaluation of their ſoules. So our caſe ſtandeth ill in both reſpects: If we haue nothing we deſpaire, and diſtruſt God: If we haue plentie of thinges, we loath them, and require other, being then alſo voyde of faith. Concerning the firſt, we flie and hate ſcarſitie and ſeeke plentie: concerning the latter, we ſeeke ſcarſitie, and flie plentie. Howſoeuer God dealeth with vs, we are not content: our incredulitie is a bottomles pit of malice and vngodlines.

Tentation by vaine glory, pleaſures and delights of the world.

Againe the deuill tooke him vp into an exceeding high moũtaine. Here he tempteth with vaine glorie & power of the world, as by the words of the deuill doth plainly appeare, who ſhewing Chriſt ỹ kingdoms of the world, offered them to him, if he would worſhip him. By this tentation they are ouercome which reuolt from faith that they may enioy glorie and power here, or at leaſt doe ſo temper their faith that they loſe not theſe thinges: In the number of theſe are all heretikes and troublers of the Church, which do therefore either leaue, or oppugne the ſinceritie of faith, that being exempted out of the common number they may be extolled on hie. So we may place this tentation on the right hand, as the firſt aſſaileth vs on the left. For as the firſt tentation is of aduerſitie, whereby we are moued to indignation, impatiencie, & diffidence, ſo this third tentation is of proſperitie, whereby we are prouoked to delights, glory, pleaſures, and whatſoeuer is excellent and delectable in the world. The ſecond tentation is altogither ſpirituall, whereby Satan by deceit, and meruelous & ſecret ſutteltie goeth about to withdraw man from faith. For whom he can not ouercome with pouertie, ſcarſitie, neceſſitie, & miſery, them he tẽpteth with riches, fauour, glorie, delights, power, &c: & ſo he aſſayleth vs on either ſide, yea when he preuaileth by neither way, he goeth about, as Peter ſaith, & attẽpteth all meanes, that whom he can ouercome neither by aduerſitie, that is, by the firſt tentation, nor by proſperitie, that is, by the third tentation, he may ouercome either by errour, blindnes, or falſe vnderſtanding of the Scriptures, that is, by the ſecond tentation which is

ſpirituall,

ſpirituall, and therefore moſt hurtfull. By which if he preuaile againſt any, they are alſo ouercome both on the left ſide and on the right. For whether they ſuffer ſuch pouertie, or enioy plenty of thinges, whether they contend, or yeelde vnto all thinges, both is nothing: while they are in errour, either patience in aduerſitie or conſtancie in proſperitie can be of no importance. For in both euen heretikes often tymes do notably excell, and it is a practize of the deuill ettſoones to fayne him ſelfe ouercome in the firſt and third tentation, that he may reigne victour by the ſecond. He can be content that they that be his doe oftentymes ſuffer pouertie patiently, and doe alſo contemne the world, although they do neither of both with a ſimple hart, and ſincere faith. Euery one therfore of theſe three tentations is greiuous and very hard, but the middle one is moſt perilous of all, for it aſſayleth the doctrine of faith, and is ſpirituall, and wont to deceiue in ſpirituall thinges. The other two alſo doe aſſayle faith, howebeit in theſe outward thinges, as aduerſitie & proſperitie, although they doe alſo vrge, vs very ſore. For it can not be a litle grieuous to ſuffer pouerty, to want bread, and ſuch other thinges neceſſary. Againe it is no leſſe grieuous to neglect, & wholy to denye fauour, glorie, riches friendes, companions, and other commodities whice we haue. But an entire and ſound faith in the word of God can performe both notably, and if it be a ſtrong faith, they ſeeme very eaſie and delectable vnto it.

An entire & ſound faith can both paciently beare aduerſitie & contemne the vaine glory & delights of the world.

We can not certainly know ỹ order of theſe tentations which happened to Chriſt, for that the Euangeliſts haue not deſcribed them after one order. For Luke hath ſet that laſt, which Matthew hath ſet in the middes, & that which Matthew hath ſet laſt, Luke hath placed in the middes. But there doth not ſo much conſiſt in the order. Notwithſtanding when any wil teach the people concerning theſe tentations, it were better to follow the order of Luke. For he may fitly ſay, and thus rehearſe, that Satan doth firſt tempt vs with pouertie and aduerſitie, whreby if he preuaile not, that he tempteth vs with proſperitie and glory, which if he do in vaine, that he aſſaileth vs with all his might, and tempteth vs with errour, lyes, deluſion, and other ſpiritual ſuttleties. Yet neither is this order alwayes obſerued of Satan: but he tempteth Chriſtians ſometime with the firſt, ſometime with the third tentation, as he hath and ſeeth occaſion. Matthew was not careful to

rehearſe them in that order, which they haue almoſt by ther own nature, and which may be commodious for him that ſhall teach of them. Yea it may be that they happened not vnto Chriſt by any certaine order, but that he was aſſailed of Satan one day with this, an other day with that, during the ſpace of thoſe forty dayes, as Satan thought it moſt conuenient and meete for his purpoſe.

And behold, the Angels came and miniſtred vnto him. This I thinke was done corporally, that they hauing taken bodies appeared, and miniſtred vnto him meate and drinke, as his ſeruiters at the table, and Miniſters of all other thinges neceſſary for his life. Yea and I thinke that the deuill alſo appeared vnto him in a corporall forme perhaps as an Angell. For in that he tooke Chriſt, and ſet him on a pinnacle of the temple: alſo whereas in a moment he ſhewed him all the kindoms of the world, he ſufficiently declared, that he was more then a man, & ſuch a one ſurely he ſhewed him ſelfe openly, when he offered that he would giue vnto him thoſe kingdoms, and required that he would worſhip him. And vndoutedly he did not appeare like a deuill when he did theſe thinges, for he loueth to appeare after a fayre ſort eſpecially when he will lie and deceiue: for then he transformeth himſelfe into an Angell of light, as Paule witneſſeth. Now this is written chiefly for our conſolation, that we may not dout, that many Angels ſhall miniſter vnto vs, when one deuill tempteth vs, if we fight valiantly. For if we ſtand faſt in faith, it is ſo farre of that God will ſuffer vs to be troubled and pinched with pouertie, more then is meete, that he will ſooner ſend his Angels to miniſter vnto vs, to be our butlers, our Cookes, and to helpe vs with ther miniſterie in all neceſſitie. Neither are theſe thinges written for Chriſtes cauſe, whome they can not profit, but they are written for vs, that we may learne to beleeue, that if the Angells miniſtred vnto him, they ſhall alſo when the caſe ſo requireth miniſter vnto vs his breathren and members. The Lord giue vs faith to beleeue this.

1.Cor.11.14.

In the time of tentation we muſt nothing dout of of Gods help and deliuerance

A

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING THE LEADING OF A GODLY LIFE.

Epheſ. 5.

Verſe 1. BE ye therfore followers of God as deare children.

2. And walke in loue, euen as Chriſt hath loued vs, and hath giuen him ſelfe for vs to be an offering & a ſacrifice of a ſweete ſmelling ſauour to God.

3. But fornication, & all vncleannes, or couetouſnes, let it not be once named among you, as it becommeth Sainctes.

4. Neither filthines, neither foolish talking, neither ieſting, which are thinges not comely, but rather giuing of thankes.

5. For this ye know, that no whooremonger, neyther vncleane perſon, nor couetous perſon, which is an idolater, hath any inheritaunce in the kingdome of Chriſt, and of God.

6. Let no man deceiue you with vaine words: for, for ſuch thinges commeth the wrath of God vpon the children of diſobedience.

7. Be not therefore companions with them.

8. For ye were once darkenes, but are now light in the Lord: walke as children of light.

9. For the fruite of the ſpirit is in all goodnes, and righteouſnes, and trueth.

THis text is exhortatorie, wherein Paule, according to his maner, and accustomed care for the brethren, exhorteth Christians not to leaue or slacke the study and care of godlines, and giue them selues to slouthfulnes, but to declare by their worke the word that they haue learned of him, that is, to shew it forth by the fruites of faith, and make it plausible and honorable, to the edifying of the Heathen, least that by the vices of them which professe the doctrine of the Gospell, they take occasion to hate that doctrine, and so be offended by them, whom it did behoue to winne them vnto Christ.

Be ye therfore followers of God as deare children. First therfore he exhorteth vs, forasmuch as we are by Christ made the sonnes of God, to imitate such a father, as deare children. Meruelous gently and alluringly he speaketh vnto vs, calling vs deare children, that by the loue of God our father towarde vs, he may prouoke vs to loue him againe, and them whom he commaundeth vs to loue, euen as he hath loued vs first. But how hath he loued vs? Surely not after that common sort alone, whereby in this life he nourisheth and sustaineth vs being vnworthy, togither with all the vngodly, making his Sunne to arise on the good, and on the euyll, and sending raine on the iust & vniust: wherof Christ speaketh Matth. 5. Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect. But he loueth vs also after an other speciall maner, in that he hath giuen his sonne for vs. Ioh. 3. For he hath aboundantly bestowed vpon vs all temporall and also eternall good things, yea his owne self, and hath as it were poured him selfe, with all that he is, hath, and can, into vs who were sinners, vnworthy, enemies, and seruaunts of Satan, so that he could not doe and giue vnto vs more & greater thinges. Now he, whom this diuine fire of loue, which filleth heauen and earth, & yet is not comprehended, doth not kindle and inflame to loue likewise his neighbour, whosoeuer he be, friende, or enemie, he I say, wil neither by law, precepts, doctrine, threatnings, and force be euer moued to godlines & loue. Walke, sayth the Apostle, in loue, whereby he signifieth that our life should be nothing els, but meere loue. Howbeit he will not haue vs walke in the loue of the world, which in loue seeketh those things which are his owne, and loueth so long as there is any thing, whereby it looketh for commoditie and lucre. Therefore he sayth: Euen as Christ hath loued vs, who neither sought nor could looke for any

The loue of God toward vs.

In what kind of loue we must walke.

profit

profit or commoditie of vs, and yet he loued vs so greatly, that he gaue him selfe for vs, and not onely his other good thinges which he giueth vs dayly, and he so gaue him selfe for vs, that he might be an oblation and sacrifice, to obtaine the good will and fauour of the father toward vs, and to bring to passe, that we might now haue God a mercifull and fauorable father, being become his true children and heires. &c. So also it behoueth vs to giue and lend, not onely to our friendes, but also to our enemies, neither to count this sufficient, but to be readie also euen to dye both for friendes and foes, thinking nothing els, but that we may serue and profit our neighbours both in body and goods, as long as we shall be in the pilgrimage of this life, seeing that we possesse all thinges being giuen vnto vs by Christ.

To be an offering and a sacrifice of a sweete smelling sauour to God. This maner of speech Paule borowed out of the old Testament, wherein those corporall sacrifices are written eftsoones to haue yeelded to the Lord a sweete sauour, that is, to haue bene acceptable vnto him. Notwithstanding that was not because of the worke and sacrifice in it selfe, as the Iewes falsely thought, and therefore were very often reproued of the Prophetes, but for Christes sake who was to come, the one and onely sacrifice of a good sauour, whom all those sacrifices of the lawe did shadowe forth, and represent. Wherefore that which Paule here sayth, is as much as if he had sayd: All the sacrifices of the olde Testament haue an ende, they can now be of no price: Christ him selfe is the onely sacrifice, which yeeldeth vnto God a sweete smelling sauour, that is, is pleasing and acceptable vnto him, whereby we are assured that we are acceptable vnto God, and doe please him. Wherefore there is no other sacrifice in the Church which may be offered for vs, beside this onely sacrifice, which being once offered, hath at once satisfied for the sinnes of all the elect. And although we after the example of this sacrifice, doe offer our bodies to God, as Paule teacheth Rom. 12. yet we offer them not either for our selues or for other, forasmuch as that is proper to Christ, the onely sacrifice, whereby the saluation of all is obtained. Wherefore those thinges smell moste stinkingly before God, whatsoeuer men offer with this minde, as though they would satisfie for their owne sinnes, or for the sinnes of other, whereof we both haue and will else where speake more.

The sacrifices of the olde Testament accepted for Christes sake, who was to come.

Christ the onely sacrifice which God accepteth, & whereby we are acceptable vnto him.

But fornication, and all vncleannes, or couetousnes, let it not
Vncleannes. be once named among you. By ỹ name of vncleannes beside fornication he vnderstandeth all lust, & lecherous filthines, which is committed out of matrimonie, which for the filthines of them he doth not vouchsafe to rehearse by name, as Rom. 1. he speaketh very grossely of them. Although in matrimony also a meane may be exceeded, & it is the dutie of Christians so to moderate the vse of mariage, that they require & perfourme due loue & beneuolence onely for auoyding fornication, but we are fallen so far, that they are most rare, which come togither onely for procreation of children and to auoyd fornication, which surely were best, and should very well become vs. Now the Apostle sayth, Let it not be once named among you, that is, be so farre from these cupls, that they may not so much as be spoken of of you. Albeit it wil neuer come to passe in this exile, that none among Christians be weake, & do not oftentimes fall, yet true Christians will neuer winke at those things: they will reproue, amend, put away, couer, & cure whatsoeuer such thing shal burst forth amongst them, that the heathen may not be offended and say: See what vices the Christians suffer among them selues, howe vncleane and lewde a life doe they leade: thinking that all their whole life is defiled with like vices as is their owne. We must needes confesse, that among Christians some doe eftsoones fal, which we must needes beare, it is wel if onely the better part liueth well, & winketh not at their sinnes, neither teacheth them, but rather reproueth and amendeth them. So Paule exhorteth Gal. 6. that they which are spirituall wil restore them that offend, with the spirit of meekenes. And he sharply reproueth the Corinthians, for that they did lightly passe ouer many sinnes of certaine persons. For sinne being reprehended & punished, is now counted as no sinne, neither can the Church be blamed because of it. After the same sort heede must be taken, that couetousnes be not named among Christians, that is, that they become not infamous by the name thereof, which they shal bring to passe, if, when it chaũceth that couetous men be amongst them, or one vseth deceit toward an other in their busines and affaires, or some contend in iudgement for those outward things, if I say, they do not winke hereat, but do reproue & correct such, that the sinceritie of the doctrine of the Gospell may obtaine due estimation among the people, & there may be no cause openly to dispraise

There is often falling among christiãs through infirmitie, & how true Christians deale in this case.

our

our ministerie, 2. Cor. 6. These thinges haue I spoken because of them, who as soone as they see that all thinges do not resemble & shew forth a holines among Christians, & that some do stumble & fall, do thinke, that there is no Christian left, that the Gospel is to no purpose, & that all things are taught and done in vaine. As though the life of Christians were now without fight victorie & due triumph ouer sinne being obtained, whē as rather it is a warfare and a continual fight. Whereas therefore they do now fight and are in the campe, it is no meruell if some flie away, if some be wounded, if some fal, yea & be euen slaine outright. Warre is not made without perill and hurt, if it be earnest warre.

As it becommeth Saincts. This he addeth to his exhortation, as a reason & cause shewing why it lieth vpon Christians, to take heede that they be not diffamed by these names: For they are Saincts, now it becommeth such to be chast, bountiful, & ready to giue, to teach and doe the same. Thou seest here, that Paule calleth Christians Saincts, while they remain yet in this life, & are pressed with flesh & blood, from which nothing cōmeth but sinne, which he doth vndoutedly not for their good workes, but because of ẏ sanctifying bloode of Christ, as he witnesseth 1. Cor. 6. But ye are washed, but ye are sāctified, but ye are iustified in the name of the Lord Iesus, & by the Spirit of our God. Forasmuch therfore as we are Saincts, it is meete ẏ we should shew ẏ same in our works, & albeit we be as yet weake, neuertheles we must daily endeuour to liue purely, & farre frō couetousnes, to ẏ praise & glory of God, & ẏ edifying of our neighbours, euen ẏ Heathen.

Christians are Saincts, & therefore must be pure not defiled with vncleānes, couetousnes &c.

Neither filthines. Al vnchast & lewd words of baudrie, vnclean nes, & lecherous matters, he calleth filthines, of which wordes aboundance is wont to be powred forth in Innes & victailling houses, in the time of eating, drinking, & playing. These the Grecians vsed very freely and accustomably more then others, as their owne Poets & other writers do sufficiently witnes. But he especially reproueth here those lewde and wanton wordes, which are spoken openly without shame, which stirre vp wicked and vnchast thoughts, and are cause of many offences, especially being spoken among youth, according to that saying: Euill speakings corrupt good manners, as the Apostle writeth to the Corinthians 1. And if any Christians should be so careles of their tongue, that such wordes should come from them, such must be chastised

Lewd, vncleane and bawdy talke forbidden.

1. Cor. 15. 33.

of the Church, and if they doe not amend, they must not be suffered, lest because of them the whole Church be ill reported of, as though these things were either taught among Christiãs, or suffered to be vnpunished, as it is wont to be among the Heathen.

Fooliſh talking prohibited.

Neither fooliſh talking. Fables and other trifling ſpeeches & iests are called fooliſh talking, which ỳ Grecians alſo were wont to vſe more then other nations, being very witty to inuent ſuch vaine ſpeeches. Of this ſort are thoſe tales, which our women & maidens are wont to tell, ſpinning at the diſtaffe, alſo the termes and verſes of iuglers and ſuch like fellowes, and many common ſonges, which are partly euen filthy, & partly containe other triſling and vaine things. But eſpecially it is vnſeemely and vnconuenient for Chriſtians to vſe ſuch fooliſh and trifling talke, when they come togither to heare the word of God, or to read and ſerch the Scriptures, and yet notwithſtanding almoſt euen ſuch folly happeneth among thẽ, when many come togither. For albeit they begin with ſerious matters, neuertheles they are meruelous eaſily brought vnto trifles: from earneſt and holy matters, to ridiculous and vaine ſpeeches, wherewith both the time is ſpent in vaine, and better things are neglected. So haue they bene wont certaine yeares hitherto, at euery feaſt of Eaſter in the tyme of preaching to tel ſome ridiculous tale to ſtirre vp the people from ſleepe. They did not vnlike at the feaſt of the natiuitie of Chriſt, vſing ſonges or carrolls, wherein they ſaid, they made diſcourſes of the birth and infancie of Ieſus, howbeit ridiculous meeter and wordes, mouing rather laughter then deuotion, as they called it: Alſo they ſoong many fained fables of the wiſe men, whom they made 3. Kings, of ỳ paſſion of ỳ Lord, of the punishmãt of Dorothea, & many other, all which were nothing but fooliſh talking & vain inuẽtions, altogither vnworthy of Chriſtians. To the nũber of theſe I might well adde thoſe hiſtories of Saincts, which they cal the legends, and that floode of lies, of miracles and pilgrimages to images, and moniments of Saincts, Maſſes, and worſhippings of Saincts, indulgences and innumerable other, not ſo much fooliſh as vngodly inuentions, whirh in the aſſemblies of the Church, were wont to be chiefly extolled in the pulpit, which were ſo contrary to godlines, that they deſerue much rather to be called the wicked inuentions of Satan, then fooliſh imaginations of mẽ. For they did not as ridiculous lies are wont to do, corrupt

good

good maners only, of which Paule speaketh especially here, but they did wholy ouerthrow faith, and put out of place the word of God, so that they did not only not beseme Saincts, but did plainly abolish all Sainctes. Those former therefore were fables and tales of men, which are not beleeued, nether esteemed any thing of, but rather laught at although in the meane season they corrupt good maners, withdraw Christians from serious matters, and make them slack and slouthful. But these later are deuelish fables, which are beleeued for a truth, and counted for serious, yea and heauenly matters, when as notwithstanding they be nothing els but fained deuises of Satan, whereby he with his angells deludeth and mocketh vs.

Neither iesting. Hereby he vnderstandeth all pleasaunt speeches, which they whom they call iesters are wont to vse, to make men mery, which by pleasaunt discourses and mery termes doe moue laughter & stirre vp mens minds to mirth & cheerefulnes, which is wont to be vsuall in ciuill bankets, and when ciuill companions meete togither. This iesting the Heathen counted for a vertue, especially Aristotle. But Paul among Christians giueth it place among vices. For Christians haue other speeches, wherby they may recreat and chere them selues in Christ, which also do bring some profit with them, although it easily hapneth, that many Christians do offend oftentimes herein. But they that are true Christians, doe neuer prayse it, neither doe suffer that any should giue himselfe to this iesting, and study to exceede therein, but they reproue and prohibit him, especially in the Church, in ỹ time of preaching and teaching. For Christ hath witnessed, that we shall in the last day giue an account of euery idle worde. It is meete in deede that Christians be an elegant & amiable people, but therewithall graue, that there may be seene in them a seuere gentlenes, and a gentle seueritie, as the life of Christ is described vnto vs in the Gospells.

Iesting neither allowed nor vsed among Christians

Matth.12.36.

Things which are not comely, but rather giuing of thankes. This comprehendeth all idle words, which want a proper name. Now I call them idle words which make neither to the edifying of faith, nor to the vse of our corporall life. For there be things enow both profitable and pleasaunt, which when it pleaseth vs to speake, we may talke of in the short time of this life, as of Christ, of loue, and other things either necessary or profitable. Whereof

Idle wordes.

Paule admoniſheth when he ſayth: but rather giuing of thankes. For our daily ſpeech ought to be the prayſe of God, and giuing of thankes to him, as well priuately, as publikely in ſermons, for ſuch infinite good thinges, as he hath giuen vnto vs in Chriſt, euen vnſpeakeble. But ſuch is the maner of our reaſon & nature, that neceſſary and profitable thinges are neglected, and fooliſh & friuolous things are chiefly regarded. Now marke here, if Paul doth not ſuffer in Chriſtians ſpeeches, that be onely pleaſant and tending to mirth, what thinkeſt thou would he ſay of that peſtilēt backebyting and ſlaundering, which raigneth now in all companies of men, euen them that be priuate, when two oftentimes do talke together? Yea what would he ſay of them which openly in ſermons do as it were bite and rent one an other with reprochful wordes, and malitiouſly accuſe and ſpeake euill one of an other? For this ye know, that no whoremonger, neither vncleane perſon, nor couetous perſon, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Chriſt and of God. In theſe wordes he doth very plainly pronounce againſt them which are infected w̄ ſuch vices: that they are heathen vnder the name of Chriſtians, how many ſoeuer do not bring forth the frutes of faith. This is a briefe and a certaine ſentence: He that is a fornicator, hath denied ẏ faith, an vncleane perſon hath denied ẏ faith, a couetous perſon hath denied ẏ faith, all ſuch are Apoſtataes, pertured, & traitours toward God: as Paul writeth alſo vnto Timothe, of him ẏ neglecteth them that be of his familie: If there be any, ſayth he, that prouideth not for his owne, & namely for thē of his houſhold, de denieth the faith, and is worſe then an Infidell. How could he more ſeuerely and terribly fraie vs from vices? For he ſayth: For this ye know, as if he ſayd: Do not ſo much as dout, count it not for a play, neither let it be a ſport vnto you, neither comfort your ſelues with vaine hope of a Chriſtian name, and for that ye are counted Chriſtians, theſe thinges ſhall profit you no more then it profited the Jewes, that they were the children of Abraham, and diſciples of Moſes. It was ſpoken to all which Chriſt ſayth Matth. 7. Not euery one that ſayth vnto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heauen: there is neede of doing, & our faith muſt be proued by workes. Whom therefore that great force of heauenly fire ſhall not inflame vnto godlines, that is, the

A fornicator an vncleane perſon and a couetous perſon hath denied the faith. 1. *Tim.* 5. 8.

Two very forcible meanes to.

admonition

admonition of the incomparable loue of God toward vs, which be set in the first place, him let these horrible threatninges of hell fire moue, to wit, whereas he witnesseth, that as many as wil not follow God, and walke in loue, and shew forth their faith by their workes, are neither the sonnes of God, nor heires of his kingdome, whereupon it followeth, that they are vndoutedly heires with Satan of hell fire. Whom therefore these two so mightie prouokements shall not stirre vp to the feare of God & godlines, with all diligence to doe the dutie of a Christian, he is plainely a blocke and a stone, hauing a hart harder then the Anuill, as Iob sayth.

stirre vs vp vnto godlines.

He particularly reproueth a couetous person, and pronounceth him an Idolater or worshipper of Images, whereby surely he declareth, how greatly he is displeased with them that are infected with this vice, and in the third chapter of his Epistle to the Colossians he sayth also the same thing of him. The cause hereof I thinke to be this: other sinners vse onely that thing, wherein they offend, and make it serue their lust and desire: so the fornicator and vncleane person vse their body to pleasure: the proud person vseth riches, learning, the fauour of men, and such like, vnto glory: onely this miserable Idolater is a slaue to his money and riches, and his sinne is, that he spareth his money and goods, keepeth and hoordeth them vp, dareth not apply them neither to his owne vse, nor to the vse of other, but doth plainly serue and worshyp them as his god, and so much esteemeth them, that he would sooner lose and suffer to perishe the kingdome of God, then he would spende his money, or giue the value of a rush towarde the maintaining either of a preacher, or an instructer of youth, whereby the word of God and his kingdom might be furthered. Forasmuch therefore, as all the trust and hope of such a man is reposed in money, and not in God alone, who giueth him aboundantly whereby to lyue, money is worthily called his God, and he himselfe sayd to be an Idolater, and hath no inheritaunce in the kingdom of heauen. What can be inuented more filthy and pestilent then this disease? Wo vnto thee, incredulitie, how an abominable and hurtfull cupll art thou?

The couetous man an idolater.

We must take heede we be not deceiued with vaine wordes.

Let no man deceiue you with vaine wordes. These are the vaine wordes of them which extenuate and make light of fornication and such like sinnes, as though they were not greatly cupll,

or did so much offende God. There were not wanting Philosophers and Poets among the Heathen, which counted all vse of lechery beside only adulterie, lawfull, as a thing naturall, as is to vse meate and drinke. So sayth Terence: It is not a wickednes, beleeue me, for a young man to follow harlots. &c. But this is to be ignorant of God, and to liue according to the lore of concupiscence, as the Gentiles were wont to doe. Moreouer such vaine words are those, which albeit they haue some likelihood of truth, yet in deede are trifling, and shall not excuse any. So couetousnes doth not want a cloake and pretence for it selfe: for him that seeketh his owne with the discommoditie of others, they call a good husband, industrious, one that looketh to his busines, although in the meane while the poore perish with hunger, or are otherwyse afflicted aboue their strength. Wherefore such speeches are prophane and heathnish, by which loue is extinguished, & they which giue eare to them & beleeue them, are deluded with a vaine hope.

For, for such things commeth the wrath of God vpō the children of disobedience. This is an other light which we ought to follow, leauing the obscure light of reason, which doth not greatly condemne fornication, vncleannes, couetousnes. &c. This our light witnesseth, that for such things the wrath of God commeth vpon vnbeleeuers, whom he calleth the children of disobedience, and therefore can not abide to beleeue the word of God, & to giue them selues to the obedience of faith. This Paule declareth. 1. Cor. 10. by many examples, where he sayth that a great part of the people was slaine for fornication, of which deede is spoken also Num. 25. For violence also, couetousnes, and vncleannes, the whole world was destroyed by the flood. Wherefore a sufficient sharpe, yea and a certaine vengeance abideth them that are infected with these wickednesses. Now he calleth them the children of disobedience, that is, of incredulitie, which is as much as if he had sayd: of them that haue reuolted from the faith, and haue renounced Christ. Hereby therefore we see and learne, that he that doth not approue his faith by workes, is no better then a Heathen, yea worse, inasmuch as he hath renounced Christ, and denied the faith once receiued. For this cause therefore the vengeance and wrath of God shall come vpon them that are such, as we Germanes do nowtrie, vnto whom God sendeth abundantly the pestilence, famine, & cruell warres. Let men take heede they giue

The wrath & vēgeance of God hangeth ouer fornicators, vncleane & couetous persons.

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no eare to those deceiuers, which with vaine wordes promise that those sinnes shal escape vnpunished: Let those slack and slouthful Christians beware, who although they be not blinde Heathen, but knowe well that vncleannes and couetousnes are sinnes, and thinke or teach no otherwise, doe neuertheles liue wickedly, resting vpon faith, whereby they hope that they shall obtaine saluation without workes, forasmuch as workes doe not saue: Yea albeit they very well know, that faith without workes is a fained faith, and that worthie frutes and good workes must needes followe, where a true and sounde faith is, yet notwithstanding they liue securely in their sinnes, presuming of the grace and mercy of God, nothing fearing God and his iudgement, when as notwithstanding it is certaine, that God doth require the mortification of the olde Adam, and good frutes of good trees. Although perhaps Paule speaketh not here properly of these, but of thē which thinke, and in vaine wordes teach, that fornication, couetousnes, and such like are not sinnes, as the blynde Heathen dyd, & many do at this day vnder the name of Christians: yet is it to be feared, seeing they liue no better then the Heathen doe, & be themselues fornicatours & couetous persons, that they shal feele the like vengeance of God with them, yea so much more grieuous vengeance, as they doe know more certainly that those are sinnes, according to that saying Rom. 2. Thinkest thou this, O thou man, that condemnest them which do such thinges, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the iudgement of God? after thine hardnes, and hart that can not repent, thou heapest vnto thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath, & of the delaration of the iust iudgement of God. &c.

Be not therefore companions with them: For ye were once darkenes, but are now light in the Lord: walke as children of light. So Peter also sayth, that it is sufficient for vs, that we haue spent the time past of our life after the lust of the Gentiles, but from hence forth should haue nothing common with them, but spende the rest of our life in the seruice and worshyp of God. When we were Gentiles, we knew not that these were sinnes, we were so blinded through incredulitie and ignorance of God. But after that we are made light in the Lord, that is lightned by Christ, we do not onely well vnderstand what God is, and what he requireth of vs, what sinne and iniquitie is, but are also able

They which are not yet lightned by Christ, are blinde & ignorant, but they whom

he hath lightened, doe know both God & their duty toward him.

now to be in steede of light vnto others, and to teach them those thinges which we haue learned. Such Paule sayd ỳ Philippians were, that they shined as lightes in the world in the middest of a naughtie & crooked nation. So before we were not onely darke, but darknes it selfe, inasmuch as we were not onely ignorant and erred, but did also bring other into the same darkenes, both by wordes and deedes. Let vs be thankefull therefore to him, which hath called vs out of this darkenes into his meruelous light, walking as the children of light, which Peter also admonisheth vs to doe.

For the fruite of the Spirit is in all goodnes, and righteousnes, and truth. Forasmuch as he hath here spoken of light, it had bin more agreeable to haue added, for the fruite of light, as the Latin editions haue, then of the Spirit, as it is read in the Greeke. Who knoweth, whether the Greekes coppies were here chaunged vpon this occasion, for that Paule in the Epistle to the Galathians entreateth of the fruites of the Spirit? But this skilleth litle, of the Spirit, and of light are all one in this place. Goodnes therefore is a fruite either of the Spirit or of light, contrarie to couetousnes, whereby a Christian man is good, that is, profitable and beneficiall to others, ready to gratifie and do well to his neighbours. Righteousnes being a fruite of the Spirit is contrary to couetousnes. For it maketh that no man doth take away from an other that which is his, either by violence, either by craft or guile, but that he endeuour rather to giue vnto euery man that which is his owne. Trueth is a fruite of the Spirit contrarie to hypocrisie & lying, which requireth that a Christian be true and vncorrupte not onely in wordes, but also in his whole life, that he doe not glorie of the name of a Christian without workes, that he be not called a Christian, & yet liue after the maner of the Heathen, in fornication, vncleannes, couetousnes, and other vices. &c.

Goodnes.

Righteousnes.

Truth.

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A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHEREIN IS DECLARED HOW GOD CAreth and prouideth for them that be his.

Luke. 5.

Verse 1. IT Hen it came to paſſe, as the people preaſed vpõ him to heare the word of God, that he ſtood by the lake of Genneſaret.

2. And ſaw two ſhips ſtand by the lake ſide, but the fiſhermen were gone out of them, & were waſhing their nettes.

3. And he entred into one of the ſhips which was Simons, and required him that he would thruſt of a litle from the land: and he ſate downe, and taught the people out of the ſhip.

4. Now when he had left ſpeaking, he ſayd vnto Simon: lanche out into the deepe, & let downe your nettes to make a draught,

5. Then Simon anſwered and ſayd vnto him: Maiſter, we haue trauailed ſore all night, and haue taken nothing, neuertheles at thy word I will let downe the net.

6. And when they had ſo done, they incloſed a great multitude of fiſhes, ſo that their net brake.

7. And they beckened to their partners which were in the other ship, that they ſhould come and helpe them, who came thẽ and filled both the ſhips, that they did ſinke.

8. Now when Simon Peter ſaw it, he fell downe at Ieſus knees ſaying: Lord goe from me, for I am a ſynfull man.

9. For he was vtterly aſtonied and all that were with him, for the draught of fiſhes which they tooke.

10. And ſo was alſo Iames and Iohn the ſonnes of Zebedeus, which were companions with Simon. Then Ieſus ſaid vnto Simon: feare not: from hence forth thou ſhalt catch men.

11. And when they had brought the ſhips to land, they forſooke all and followed him.

The faithfull ſhall want no thing that is neceſſary for the ſuſtentation of this life.

TO them that beleeue this text is moſt eaſie to be vnderſtood, which ſetteth forth two thinges vnto vs, namely faith, and temporall good thinges, & faith, and eternall good thinges. Firſt it declareth vnto them that beleeue in Chriſt, that they ſhall haue ſufficient wherewith to ſuſteine themſelues euen in this life: which Chriſt ſheweth by this, when he giueth ſo many fiſhes to Peter and his companions, as they durſt not ſo much as deſire. So that Chriſt is carefull euen how to feede the bellie, if that curſed incredulitie be not an hinderance thereunto. For beholde S. Peter, and conſider his heart aright in your minde, then ſhall ye fynde, that he did not ſo much as thinke, that he ſhould take ſo many fiſhes. God therefore is preſent, and cauſeth fiſhes to come into the nette, euen moe then they would haue wiſhed. By which example we are admoniſhed that they ſhal haue ſufficient of thoſe thinges that are neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of this life, which do beleeue, but they that doe not beleeue can neuer be ſatisfied, whereby they fall into all kinde of vices. Hereunto pertaineth that which S. Paul ſayth. 1. Tim. 6. Godlines is great gaine, if a man be content with that he hath. For we brought nothing into the world and it is certaine, that we may cary nothing out, therefore when we haue foode and rayment, let vs therewith be content. For they that wilbe rich, fall into tentation and ſnares, and into many fooliſh and noyſome luſtes, which drowne men

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in perdition & destruction. For the desire of money is the roote of all euell, which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, & perced them selues through with many sorowes. This place of S. Paul plainly declareth what followeth our vnbeliefe, to wit, that it traueleth to get substance, and laboureth to be rich, and falleth into the tentation and snares of the Deuill. But we can not see that, forasmuch as it is spirituall. If we could as well see the hurt, which it bringeth to spirituall thinges, as we can see that which it bringeth to corporall and outward thinges, then were it an easie matter to preach vnto vs. For we see plainely in outward thinges, how he that is giuen to the desire of money, scrapeth and gathereth together, doth iniurie to all men, that he alone may gather together and heape vp many thinges, whereunto he may trust and say: Well, nowe haue I goodes enough. Whereby we may gather how vnkinde & vnmerciful a couetous man is: for he doeth good to no man, he sheweth himselfe gentle and kynde to no man, he giueth nothing to any man, but looketh vnto his owne lucre and commoditie. Frutes of incredulitie.

Now this is a cursed thing, that we can not so much as trust vnto the Lord, that he will feede our belly, thinking alwayes that we shall perish with hunger, when as notwithstaning we shall haue thinges necessarie and that which is sufficient for vs, as Christ sayth Matth. 6. I say vnto you, be not careful for your life, what ye shall eate, or what ye shall drinke: nor yet for your bodie, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more worth then meate? and the body then rayment? Behold the foules of the ayre: for they sow not, neither reape, nor carie into the barnes: yet your heauenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better then they? Which of you by taking care, is able to adde one cubit vnto his stature? And why care ye for rayment? Learne how the lillies of the field do grow: they are not weried, neither spinne: yet I say vnto you, that euen Salomon in all his glorie was not araied like on of these. Wherefore if God so cloathe the grasse of the field, which though it stād to day is to morow cast into the ouen, shall he not do much more vnto you, O ye of litle faith? Therefore take no thought, saying: what shal we eat? or what shall we drinke? or wherewith shall we be clothed? (For after all these thinges seeke the Gentiles:) For your heauenly Father knoweth that ye haue neede of all these thinges

But seeke ye first the kingdome of God and his righteousnes, and all these thinges shall be ministred vnto you. Care not then for the morow: for the morow shall care for it selfe: the daye hath enough with his owne griefe. Ye see in this place, howe God hath a care for the foules and flowers, & doth adorne them after a most goodly sort: how much more will God giue vnto vs those thinges that be necessarie? and yet we can not put our trust in him, so that the Deuell entangled vs in his snares. When one commeth so farre, that he is not contēt with that he hath, neither trusteth in God, then charitie must needes sodenly ceasse, so that he doth good to no man, but onely prouideth that his owne heape be encreased. Hereupon came the spirituall state of sacrificing Priestes, and Monkes, that they might onely helpe themselues, feede their belley, auoide labour, inter into Monasteries, that thereof did arise a true prouerbe: Desperation maketh a Monke, yea not only a monke, but sacrificing Priests, Bishops & Popes: for they trust not in God, that he is able to feede them, but they studie vpon this onely, that they may be deliuered from all miserie and infirmitie, which is altogither to liue in incredulitie: they neuer trusted in God, that he is able to giue them nourishment and thinges necessarie, if any of them should marry a wife and remaine without that state of Antichrist.

Where trust in God is not there charitie ceasseth.

Moreouer, here is an example set forth vnto vs, which prouoketh and alureth vs to confidence, and first that we commit our bellie to God: for he hath a care of vs, euen in temporall thinges. Which sufficiently appeareth in Peter, whereas he tooke such a great multitude of fishes, which ranne by great companies into his nettes. Whereby it plainly signified that God will forsake no man, but that euerie one shall haue enough, if that we shall onely trust in him, as the 37. Psal. affirmeth: I haue bin yong, and now am olde, and yet saw I neuer the righteous forsaken, nor his seede begging bread. Things necessarie shal not be wanting vnto vs, if faith be not wanting: for before we should want, the very Angels should come, & minister vnto vs foode. Whereas therefore men are commonly oppressed with so great miserie, onely vnbeliefe is the cause thereof. And albeit God be with vs, notwithstanding he requireth yet of vs, worke or labour, and hope, if he at any time differre somewhat to helpe vs. He commaundeth Peter here, that for the taking of fishes, he should cast

We must labour, & not be carefull, but commit the successe vnto God.

forth

forth his nettes: Lanche out into the deepe, sayth he, and let downe your nettes to make a draught, as if the Lord sayd: Do thou that which belongeth to a fisher, cast thy net into the deepe, and commit the successe vnto me, leane the care vnto me. God leaueth not the care vnto thee, but the worke and labour: howbeit we after a cleane contrary order, studie to commit the care to our selues and the labour to him. Whereby it commeth to passe, that euery one for himselfe applyeth his mynde earnestly to gaine, and to gather money vnto himselfe, that he may not be enforced by any meanes to take paines and labour. But if thou wilt liue a Christian life, leaue vnto thy God to care howe the fishes shall come into the nets, and goe thou, and take vpon thee the state wherein thou mayst labour. Howbeit for the most part, we wish such states of life, as in which there is no neede of labour, which is altogither a deuelish thing. And therefore haue we bin consecrated Monkes and sacrificing Priestes, that we might liue onely like Gentlemen, without labour. And for the same cause parents haue set their children to schole, that at ỹ last they might liue merie dayes, and so serue God, as they thought. Whereby it came to passe that they did not knowe, what a good life was: forasmuch as God especially commendeth that, and that in deed is acceptable vnto him, which is gotten with the sweate of the browes, as he commaunded Adam. Gen. 3. In the sweate of thy face shalt thou eate bread. and the deeper thou art occupied in the lawe, in so much better case thy thinges are, wherefore followe thy worke, labour, and trust in God, all carefulnes being cast of.

Now some murmur, and say, if faith be preached, that we must trust in God, and leaue the care vnto him, I might long enough, say they, beleeue or trust, before I should haue wherewithall to be fed and sustained, if I should not labour. Yea it is plaine enough that thou must labour, forasmuch as labour is commaunded thee: Howbeit suffer God to care for thee, beleeue thou, and labour, then shalt thou assuredly haue those thinges that be necessarie for the sustentation of thy life. And this is an other thing, that we must hope notwithstanding, though God differreth for a time. Therefore he suffereth them to labour al the night, and to take nothing, and sheweth himselfe to be such a one, as will suffer them to perish with hunger. Which might haue

We must stil labour and hope, though God differreth his help for a time, for he will at the last assuredly helpe vs.

come into the minde of Peter, when he had fished so long and taken nothing, so that he might haue sayd: now God will suffer my belly to perish with pining and famine. Howbeit he doth not so, but goeth on still in his labour, he plieth his worke & hopeth that God at the last will giue him fishes, albeit he differreth a time. God therefore is present, and giueth him so many fishes in one day, as he could scarce take in ỳ space of eight dayes. Wherefore these thinges are to be learned well of thee, that thou labour and hope, although God differreth his blessing a litle. For albeit he differreth a while, and suffreth thee to labour sore, so that thou now thinke thy labour to be lost, yet must thou not therefore despaire, but repose thy hope in him, trusting assuredly that he will at ỳ last giue thee prosperous successe. For he wil certainly come & giue more then thou didst neede, as he did heere vnto S. Peter. Wherefore if God delayeth with thee a litle, thinke with thy selfe, he delayed also with S. Peter, and yet afterward gaue vnto him aboundantly. Commit thy matter therefore to his good will and pleasure, and leaue not of thy worke, but hope still, and then shall not thy hope be frustrate. Thus much concerning the former part of the text, now let vs heare the latter. After therefore that they had taken fishes, and tasted the frute of faith, their faith is increased and augmented. We therefore must go so farre, that we may commit our belly to God: for he that can not commit so much as his belly to him, will neuer commit his soule vnto him. Howbeit that is onely a childish faith. Here we learne first to go by benches and settles: here we do feede on milke as yet: but we must likewise learne by these to commit our soule also to God. The Euangelist so meaneth when he sayth:

Now when Simon Peter saw it, he fell downe at Iesus knees, saying: Lord, goe from me, for I am a sinnfull man. For he was vtterly astonied, and all that were with him, for the draught of fishes which they tooke. Let Peter be here a type or figure of them which beleeue eternall good thinges, and count him as one verily looking for & seeing the good things to come. A sinful conscience is of that nature, that it so behaueth it selfe, as Peter here did, whereas he flieth his Sauiour, and thinketh: Lord, I am more vnworthy, then that I should be saued, and sit among thy Saincts and Angelles: for that good is most exceeding high. Here a straight conscience is not able to comprehende such great

The nature of a sinfull conscience.

good

good things, but it thus thinketh: If I were as Peter & Paule, I could easily beleeue: Which is altogether a foolish and vaine thing. For if thou wouldest place thy selfe according to thine owne holines, thou shouldest build vpon the sande. Thou must not do so, but behaue thy selfe like vnto Peter, for in that he esteemed himselfe vile, and iudged himselfe vnworthy of so great grace, he rightly became worthy. And therefore, whereas thou art a sinner, thou must trust in God, and dilate and open wide thy conscience and hart, that grace may enter in. After thou hast now knowne God, thou must reiect none of his giftes, that is, when as thou seest the great good thinges, thou must not despeire. It is good that we know our selues, & the deeper we know our selues, so much the better. But that grace is not to be refused because of thy sinnes. For when thou shalt finde thy conscience to tremble, so that it would driue away sinnes, then art thou most ready and most fitte to receiue grace, then shalt thou finde comfort in thy conscience, and say with Micheas: Who is such a God as thou, that pardonest wickednes, & castest all our sinnes into the bottome of the Sea? Whosoeuer take not away sinnes, they are no Gods, but Idols: whereupon he sayeth rightly, that none is like vnto our God. For other gods will finde and not bring godlines, but the Almightie God doth not finde it, but bring it: wherefore thou must not forthwith despeire, if thy conscience trembleth and feeleth sinne. For the more defiled that thou art, so much the sooner doeth the Lord poure in his grace, if so be thou be repentant and thirstest after it. A great part goe so farre that they say they merit grace, whiles they dispose them selues thereunto, which is, as they interpret, whiles they doe that which lyeth in them, and also that they doe satisfie for their sinnes. But it is not so. The Scripture teacheth vs, that it is God that taketh away sinne, and casteth it into the bottome of the Sea. We shall not put away sinnes by our workes, neither shall we be iustified of our selues. God himselfe, and none but he shall doe the thing, of his meere grace as Esay sayth: I am, euen I am he onely, that for mine owne selfes sake doe take away thine offences, and forget thy sinnes, so that I will neuer thinke vpon them more. And so must thou beleeue, otherwise thou shalt neuer obtaine a ioyfull conscience. Wherefore, when as Peter sayd, I am a sinner, he sayd right. It is true indeede, there were causes, why

Though we feele y burde of our sinnes we must not despaire, but trust in God that he wyll remit the & receiue vs vnto grace.

Mich.7.

Esa.43.25.

he might be afrayde of himselfe, and humble himselfe, but he ought not to refuse God, but most willingly receiue him. Wherefore when thou shalt feele thy sinne, like as Peter did, and shalt perceiue that thou wouldest now flie from God, then is it neede that thou doe forthwith turne thy selfe, and come more and more vnto him. For if God should goe away, and would not take away thy sinne, would not come vnto thee, nor seeke thee, yet the more thou perceiuest thy selfe a sinner, the more haste thou oughtest to make vnto him, which see thou marke well, and lay it vp in a myndefull memorie. For as Sainct Peter doeth here, so all consciences doe, which are terrified of sinnes, and would flie from God, & seeke an other God, do not thou leaue so, but come boldly, and ioyne thy selfe nearer vnto God. Otherwise if one goe away to seeke workes, and helpe of an other God, he is then founde like the foolishe Virgins, which while they goe to get themselues oyle, are in the meane season shut out. But what doeth Christ, when Peter so humbleth himselfe? and by reason of his great feare and terrour, desireth the Lord to depart from him, did he leaue him in such desperation of himselfe? No truly, but he comforteth him, saying thus:

God sustayneth the faithful both in body and spirit.

Feare not, from hēce forth thou shalt catch mē. This is a ioyfull word, whereby weake hartes receiue comfort. Now therefore, that God hath a care for vs, yea euen in those thinges that pertaine to the body, ye see by this, that he giueth Peter so many fishes: he maketh him also so full and rich in spirit, that he ought to bestow some of his plenty vpon others. He maketh him a fisher both in body and in spirit: in body, for that he taketh many fishes which he may sell: but in spirit he is a fisher of men. For he hath the Gospel, whereby other men must be brought to God by him, and the kingdome of Christ be increased. Loe, it commeth to passe, that where men beleeue, the Lord giueth so much, as succoureth and helpeth all men. The faithfull man outwardly helpeth the needy with his substaunce and goods: And from within he breaketh forth, teacheth other, and enricheth them also inwardly. For such a man can not holde his peace, but is inforced to shewe and declare to others, how he is delt with, as it is in the. 51. Psal. Make me a cleane hart, O God, and renue a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. O giue me the comfort of thy helpe

againe, and ſtabliſh me with thy free Spirt. Then ſhall I teach thy wayes vnto the wicked, and ſynners ſhalbe conuerted vnto thee. And in an other Pſalme alſo Dauid ſayeth: I beleeued, and therefore will I ſpeake. Which is thus much in effect: when I beleeue, I knowe God, and taſt of his goodnes, then I conſider the caſe of other men, and goe and declare ſuch knowledge & goodnes of God vnto them. We ſee therefore in this text, howe carefull God is for them that be his, and that he doth ſuſteine them both in body and in ſpirit. But if he doth ſometime differre any thinge, without all doute it is through the fault of our incredulitie, or becauſe we haue now new begon to beleeue. For where faith is new and litle, there is ſometime ſmall and ſclender helpe, that we may learne to know the Lorde, and to truſt in him. But when we haue gone ſo farre that we truſt ſtrongly in God, then nothing can be wanting to vs, then God poureth vpon vs both corporall and ſpirituall good thinges, and ſo aboundant treaſures that we may be able to helpe others. This in deede is to enrich the poore and to fill the hungrie. Thus much ſhall ſuffize concerning this text.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING TRVST IN GOD IN PENVRIE AND DISTRESSE.

Marc. 8.

Verſe 1. IN thoſe dayes, when there was a verie great multitude, and had nothing to eate, Ieſus called his diſciples to him, and ſaid vnto them.

2. I haue compaſſion on the multitude, becauſe they haue now cõtinued with me three dayes, and haue nothing to eate.

3. And if I ſend them awaye faſting to their own houſes, they would faint by the waye: for ſome of them came from farre.

4. Then his diſciples aunſwered him, whence can a man ſatisfie theſe with bread here in the wildernes?

5. And he asked them, how many loaues haue ye? and they ſaid, ſeuen.

6. Then he commaunded the multitude to ſit downe on the ground: and he tooke the ſeuen loaues, and gaue thankes, brake them, and gaue to his diſciples to ſet before them, & they did ſet them before the people.

7. They had alſo a few ſmall fiſhes: and when he had giuen thankes, he commaunded them alſo to be ſet before them.

8. So they did eate & were ſuffiſed, & they tooke vp of the broken meate that was left, ſeuẽ baſkets full.

9. And they that had eatẽ, were about foure thouſand: ſo he ſent them awaye.

I Hope dearely beloued, that ye doe well vnderſtand the meaning of this text. For your vnderſtanding is ſufficiently well grounded in theſe myſteries, ſo that ye doe eaſily perceiue what good is to be looked for in the Goſpell, and what is preſcribed vnto vs therein, namely the true nature and qualitie of fayth. And this is the cauſe why Chriſt is of all the Euangeliſtes ſet forth to be ſo louing and gentle: for although the doings and workes deſcribed of them doe oftentimes varie, neuertheles the ſimplicitie of faith remaineth alwayes alike. Moreouer this

this text doeth so liuely set forth Christ vnto vs in his colours, that it may be manifest and well knowen vnto euery one of vs, what we ought to promise our selues concerning him, to wit: that he is mercifull, bountifull, gentle, who succoureth all that flie vnto him for helpe. And such ought to be the image of fayth. For the Scripture setteth before vs a double image: one of feare, which representeth to our eyes the horrible wrath of God, before which no man is able to stand, but rather we are all enforced to be cast downe in minde, when we see it, vnles we be strengthned by fayth. Howbeit against this is sette the other image namely of Grace, which faith doth attentiuely behold, and taketh from hence principles of comfort, and conceiueth trust and confidence in the fauour of God, hauing this hope, that man can not promise to himselfe from God so manye good thinges, but that he hath infinite moe treasures in a readines for him.

By the Lawe we are terrified and cast downe, but by the Gospell we are comforted & raised vp.

Ye haue now oftetimes heard, that there are two sorts of good thinges, spirituall and corporall. The Gospell by these temporall and corporall good thinges teacheth vs the faith of children, and they are vnto the weake as a certaine meane or helpe, whereby they may learne the goodnes of God, how bountifull he is in bestowing his riches vpon vs, and that we ought in spirituall thinges also to place all our hope and trust in him. For if we be now instructed by the Gospell, that God will giue foode to our bellie, we may thereupon account with our selues, that he will nourish & cloath our soules with spirituall good thinges. If I can not commit my body vnto him that he may feede it, much lesse can I commit my soule vnto him that he may alwayes preserue it. Or if I can not be brought to beleeue, that a crowne of golde shalbe giuen vnto me of him, how I pray you, shall I hope for tenne crownes of golde of him? from whom I dare not promise to my selfe so much as a peece of bread, truly much lesse shall I be perswaded to beleeue, that he will giue a farme vnto me or his whole inheritaunce. Now he that is not able to attaine vnto this tender, and as it were as yet sucking faith, to him surely it is very hard to beleeue, that God will pardon his synnes, or preserue his soule for euer. Forasmuch as we are perswaded, that the soule is by infinite degrees to be preferred before the bellie, toward which notwithstanding he is touched

The temporall and outwarde blessings of God ought to be as meanes to make vs hope & trust in him, that he wil also bestow vpon vs spirituall and eternal good thinges.

with compassion as this our present text teacheth. Wherefore Sainct Peter hath rightly admonished: Beloued breathren, as new borne babes desire that sincere milke of the word, that ye may grow thereby. For it is not enough that the infant being put to the teate doe sucke, but he must also wax greater, and gather strength, that he may accustome himselfe to feede on breade, and stronger meate. Now to eat milke is to tast of the fauour and grace of God, which is then tasted of, when a triall thereof is had in our life. For although I should preach an hundred yeares of the bountifulnes, fauour, liberalitie and gentlenes of God toward vs, it would profit me nothing vnlesse I haue a triall and tast of those commodities, neither could I learne rightly to trust in God thereby. Hereof also thou mayst coniecture how rare a Christian man is. There are many which say, that they commit their bellie to God, but that sticketh onely in the tongue and lipps, when as rather it ought to pearce to the heart.

1. Pet. 2.

The qualitie and nature of faith.

Let vs nowe consider an example teaching vs the qualitie and nature of faith. The Apostle Heb. 11. hath written thus: Faith is the ground of thinges which are hoped for, and the euidence of thinges which are not seene: which is thus much in effect: faith is the foundation, whereby I looke for that good thinge, which is neither seene with the eyes, nor heard with the eares, but which I must onely hope for. Euen as in our present text it plainely appeareth: wherein we reade that there were about foure thousand men, who together with their wiues and children had now suffered hunger three dayes (was not this a notable kinde of fasting?) yet were not famished with hunger, being farre from their houses, and destitute of those necessaries, whereby the bodie is sustained. Now Paule sayth that faith is a thinge whereby a man hopeth for those thinges which appeare not to the eyes. Such a faith had this multitude, which although they see no meate, neuertheles they trust in God, that he wil feede them. What doeth Christ here? he is moued with compassion, he demaundeth of the disciples with what victailes, or with what thinge their hunger may be taken away. To whom his disciples aunswere: whence can a man satisfie such a multitude here in the wildernes? Here ye see how mans reason and faith agree together, that the wiser reason is, so much lesse can it

it submit it selfe to the workes of God. For this cause therefore did he aske his Disciples, that euery one of them might trie their owne reason, and learne how much the capacitie of man and faith do differ one from an other.

Here it appeareth vnto vs how reason is blynde, and how, when faith commeth, it ought to giue place. Whereof let this be as an example: If I were a maried man, hauing a wife and a companie of children, and had nothing wherewith to nourish them, neither would any man giue me any thing: yet should it be my duetie to beleeue and hope, that God will prouide for me. But when as I see my hope to be in vaine, and that I am not succoured byandby with nourishment and cloathing, then if I be faithles, I yeelde vnto desperation, and goe and purpose an other thing with my selfe, I applie my mynde to vnhonest trades, that I may get somewhat thereby, as theft, deceipt, and other such practizes, and by all meanes that I am able, I passe through the stormes of aduersitie. See what filthie incredelitie bringeth vnto man. But if I be indued with faith, I shut mine eyes and say: Most gentle Father, I am thy creature, and thy worke, it can not be denied but thou hast created me, I will put all my trust in thee, which hast greater care of my welfare then I my selfe. Thou wilt well nourish, feede, cloath, and helpe, where and when thou shalt know best. So faith is a sure foundation, whereunto I trusting, doe looke for those thinges which I see not, and that I may speake at once, it shall not want those thinges that be necessarie. Surely the Angels themselues should come downe from heauen, & giue bread digged euen out of the earth, vnto such a faithfull man, that he might be nourished, rather then he should be pined with hunger, yea heauen and earth shall passe, before God will suffer a man endued with such faith to want either cloathing or any other necessarie things. This singular trust and confidence in God, the comfortable and effectuall worde of the diuine promise doeth require. Whereof Dauid glorieth Psal. 37. I haue been young and nowe am olde, and yet sawe I neuer the righteous forsaken, nor his seede begging bread. And againe: God knoweth the dayes of the righteous, their inheritaunce shall continue for euer. They shall not be confounded in the perilous time, and in the dayes of dearth they shall haue enough. But if we shall aske counsell

Reason must giue place to faith.

No maner of thing that is good shalbe wanting to the faithfull.

of reason, it will forthwith say (as the Disciples did before) this thing is vnpossible: for it looketh for nothing, it trusteth to nothing, when nothing is present. Of like diffidence were the Disciples, who thought thus with thēselues: how can it be that such a great multitude of men should be here refreshed with meate: truly it exceedeth our capacitie. If they had seene an heape of money, store of bread, and shambles full of flesh, they could then haue easily relieued this present necessitie, they could haue put al in a good hope, and fitly haue disposed all thinges, according to the capacitie of their reason.

And thus much shall suffize to be spoken concerning the faith of temporall good things: now we will entreat of spirituall good thinges, which shall come vnto vs when we shall dye. Then shall we see death set before our eyes, when as notwithstanding we would willingly liue, then shall hell appeare vnto vs, when we rather desire for heauen, then shall we beholde the iudgement of God, notwithstanding his grace would be much more acceptable vnto vs. In a summe, whatsoeuer we would desire to see, shalbe taken out of our sight, yea and no creature shall helpe vs against death, hell, and the iudgement of God. But if I beleeue, I say thus vnto my selfe: well, faith is a sure foundation: herewith I being stayed vp, shall attaine vnto those thinges which are very farre out of my sight, albeit those thinges be horrible which be in my sight, yet shall they not hurt him that beleeueth. Although therefore I doe presently see nothing, but death, hell, and the iudgement of God, yet must I consider none of these, but rather my mynde is to be confirmed with an vndoubted trust, that God by the vertue of his promise, not in respect of my merites or workes, will giue vnto me life, blessednes, and grace. This in deede is to cleaue vnto God by syncere faith, which is here very well painted forth in this grosse and bodily image of foure thousand men, who cleauing to God onely by faith, did not doute that they should be refreshed of him. If they had iudged according to the capacitie of their reason, they would haue murmured, and sayd after this fort: surely we are a very great multitude, we are here in the wide Wildernes, we haue emptie and hungrie stomackes, here is nothing that is able to fil them. Howbeit they murmured of none of these things, but conceiuing a sure confidence, reasoning nothing against God after

Faith ceasseth not to truste in God euen in greatest extremitie and distresse.

after the affection of men, they commende them ſelues wholy to the good will of God, and commit vnto him this vrgent neceſſitie of hunger, they themſelues being quiet from all care. Then God, before this care commeth vpon them, and before they begin to aſke of him, is preſent, being more carefull for them, then they are for them ſelues, & ſayth on this ſort: I am moued with compaſſion toward the multitude: if I ſend them away faſting, it is a daunger leſt they faint by the way. Behold how gentle & bountifull we haue God toward vs, who hath euen a care to feede the vncleane belly. Here now our hope is erected, and the wordes of Chriſt are comfortable to a man, when he ſayth: They haue now continued with me three dayes, it now behoueth me to giue ſufficient vnto them to eate. Here we may ſee, that all that doe sticke diligently to the word of God, arr fed of God him ſelfe.

Wherefore let vs dearly beloued, at the laſt begin to beleeue, for onely diffidence & incredulitie is the mother of all ſinnes and vices, which at this day raigne in all ſorts of men. How commeth it to paſſe, that euery where, whitherſoeuer we turne vs, there are ſo many harlots and baudes, ſuch plentie of deluders and deceiuers, ſo many theeues, pillers, vſurers, robbers, Simoniſtes, as they call them, and ſellers of benefices. All theſe diffidence toward God bringeth forth vnto vs. For ſuch kind of men do iudge onely according to humane reaſon, and reaſon looketh vnto that which is preſent: but that which it ſeeth not, it is not able to comprehend: wherefore while it doth not repoſe her truſt by faith in God, it is enforced to deſpaire, which deſperation afterward cauſeth ſuch naughtie and wicked men. Behold thus it goeth out of frame with vs, when we cõmit our ſelues to be ruled, not to faith, but to our owne reaſon. Incredulitie the mother of ſinne.

Moreouer, as ye haue now learned faith, ſo muſt ye alſo learne loue. For Chriſt is ſet forth vnto vs in a double forme, in one, of faith, that we ſhould not be ouer carefull: in an other, of loue, that we may learne, that as he hath care of vs, giuing vs meate, drink, apparel, & that of meere & bountifull loue, not for his owne commodities ſake, or becauſe of our merites: ſo alſo we ought to doe well to our neighbour, and that freely, onely loue mouing vs thereunto, that as Chriſt is to vs, ſo we may be to our neighbour. Hereupon now we may perceiue, that all works of Monks and Nunnes are vaine and to be vtterly diſallowed, when they Chriſt an example of loue.

are not directed to that ende, that they may serue their neighbour, but are ordeined onely vnto this ende, that they may merit much at Gods handes by them. For the true workes of Christians, which they desire to be accepted of God, must be done so, that they tend to the profit of our neighbour, and not to this ende, that we shoulde thinke that we shall merit many thinges of God by them, they must be cheerefully and freely bestowed vpon al, euen as Christ hath done, who hath spread abroad and freely bestowed his goodnes vpon all. These thinges haue I briefly spoken concerning this text, that ye may thereby learne, that God requireth this especially of vs, that we doe firmely and constantly trust in him, and that we freely doe good and be benefitiall to our neighboures, according as God hath of his meere goodnes and mercie bestowed infinite benefites and blessinges vpon vs. The Prophet sayth Psal. 50. Heare O my people and I will speake, I my selfe will testifie vnto thee O Israell, I am the Lord, euen thy Lord. I will not reproue thee, because of thy sacrifices, or for thy burnt offeringes, for that they be not alway before me. I will take no Bullocke out of thy house, nor Goates out of thy foldes, for all the beastes of the Forest are mine, and so are the cattell vpon a thousand Hills. I know all the fowles vpon the Mountaines; and the wild beastes of the Field are at my commaundement. If I be hungrie, I will not tell thee: for the whole World is mine, and all that is therein. Thinkest thou that I will eate Bulles flesh, and drinke the blood of Goates? After the same sort he sayth vnto vs: Behold Israell, that is, thou faithfull man, I am thy God, thou art not my God, I wyll giue vnto thee, thou giuest nothing to me, I will not be angrie with thee, for that thou offerest not many things vnto me. For whatsoeuer is in thy stable, in thy houses, in thy court, it was all mine before, for I haue sent it thither. Whereby he briefly reproueth the Iewes, who did meruelously please them selues in their sacrifices. Now because he reiecteth these sacrifices, what will he haue to supplie the place of them? truely euen that which followeth in the same place: Offer vnto me praise, and thy vowes, call vpon me in the time of trouble, & I will heare thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. This is, I will haue thine hart, giue ouer thy selfe to me, & account me for a gentle, fauourable, yea and for thy God, and it shall suffize me. Wherefore place thy faith, trust and hope in him, count him for a gentle and louing

louing God, cleaue vnto him, and in extreame anguish flie vnto him for succour, and to none beside him. Beleeue and looke for helpe of him, that he will helpe thee, thou needest not any whit dout. Afterward doe good to thy neighbour with a cherefull hart and freely. These two things are set forth in this our text, as also in many other places beside.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHEREIN IS DECLARED HOW GRIEVOVSLY God punisheth the contemners of his word

Luke. 19.

Verse 41. AND when he was come neare to Ierusalem, he beheld the citie, and wept ouer it.

42. Saying, If thou hadst euē knowne at the least in this thy day those thinges, which Belonge vnto thy peace, thou wouldest take heede: but now are they hyd from thyne eyes.

43. For the dayes shall come vpon thee, that thyne enemies shall cast a trench about thee, & compasse thee round, and keepe thee in on euery side.

44. And shall make thee euen with the ground, & thy children which are in thee, and they shall not leaue in thee a stone vpon a stone, because

thou kneweſt not that ſeaſon of thy viſitation.

45. He went alſo into the temple, and began to caſt out them that ſould therein, and them that bought.

46. Saying vnto them, it is written: Mine houſe is the houſe of prayer, but ye haue made it a dēne of theeues.

47. And he taught daily in the temple. And the high Prieſtes and the Scribes, and the chiefe of the people ſought to deſtroy him.

48. But they could not find what they might doe to him, for all the people hanged vpon him when they heard him.

THE ſumme and ſcope of this text is this: The Lord is troubled and lamenteth for the euils which were to come vpon the contemners of the worde of God. Ye haue oftentimes heard, what the word of God is, what is the frute and commoditie thereof, alſo what Diſciples it hath, of which nothing is here done, or ſayd: but the puniſhment and miſerie onely is ſhewed, which was to come vpon the Iewes, for that they knew not the time of their viſitation. Which thing let vs well conſider of, for it pertaineth vnto vs alſo. If they be puniſhed which know not ẏ time of their viſitation, what ſhal come vnto them, which perſecute, blaſpheme and reprehend the Goſpell and Word of God? howbeit he ſpeaketh here onely of them which know not the ſeaſon of their viſitation. The contemners of God are preached againſt after two ſortes: firſt by threatnings, as Chriſt threatneth them Matth. 11. Wo be to thee, Corazin: Wo be to thee Bethſaida: for if the great works which were done in you had bene done in Tyrus and Sidon, they had repented long agone in ſackecloth and aſhes. But I ſay vnto you, it ſhall be eaſier for Tyrus and Sidon at the day of iudgement, then for you. And thou Capernaum (which was his owne citie, wherein chiefly he wrought miracles) which art lifted vp vnto heauen, ſhalt be brought downe to hell: for if the great workes which haue bene done in thee had

Two wayes to preach againſt the contemners of Gods word.

had bene done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this day. But I say vnto you, that it shal be easier for them of the land of Sodom in the day of iudgement, then for you. These are the threatnings wherewith he terrifieth them, that they shoulde not so neglect the word of God. The other way the Lord here sheweth when as he sheedeth teares, and is touched with pitie toward miserable and blinde men, he doth not terrifie or threaten them, as being indurate and obstinat, but is rather wholy moued with loue and taketh pitie on his enemies, and would willingly call them backe, but that he could preuaile nothing with them, & the meanes which he vsed to reclaime thē were in vaine. Before in Matthew, whereas he sharpely rebuketh them, he dealeth not by loue, but by rigour, but here is pure loue and pitie, as we shall afterwards see.

First, when he drew neare to the citie, some went before him, and some followed him, with great ioy singing and saying: Hosanna the sonne of Dauid, they spred their garments in the way, they cut downe branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way, and all thinges were done after a goodly maner, but in the middest of this ioy Christ beginneth greatly to weepe, he suffereth al to reioyce, notwithstanding his eyes gushed out in teares, when he beheld the citie, and sayd: If thou haddest euen knowne at the least in this thy day those thinges which belong vnto thy peace, thou wouldest take heede: but nowe are they hid from thine eyes. As if the Lord shoulo say: O, if thou knewest what belongeth vnto thy peace that thou mightest not be destroyed, but stand stil, thou wouldest yet at this day consider of it and beware. Now it were time for thee to know that which should be best for thee, but thou art blinde, & wilt neglect the time, then shall there be no place neither for helpe nor counsell. As if he sayd: thou standest here adorned with sumptuous and goodly buildings, and there are in thee mightie citizens, which are both secure and merie, thinking that no daunger hangeth ouer them, but after the space of forty yeares thou shalt be destroyed. Which the Lorde plainely foretelleth in these words.

Christ lamēteth for Ierusalem.

The dayes shall come vpon thee, that thine enimies shal cast a trēch about thee, and compasse thee round, and keepe thee in on euery side, and shall make thee euen with the ground, and thy children which are in thee, and they shall not leaue in thee

a ſtone vpon a ſtone, becauſe thou kneweſt not that ſeaſon of thy viſitation. Now the Iewes, as they ſuppoſed, ſtoode vnmoueable & ſafe, reſting vpon the promiſe of God, ſo that they thought no otherwiſe, but that they ſhould perſeuerantly continue ſo for euer, they were ſecure and thought thus with them ſelues: God will not ſend ſuch thinges unto vs: we haue the temple, wherein God himſelfe is reſident. We haue alſo plentie of excellent men, money and other thinges, Goe to then, who can doe any hurt or harme to vs? Moreouer the Emperour and people of Rome hauing taken the citie, ſeeing it furniſhed with ſo many and ſo great munitions and goodly and excellent buildings, merueiled greatly, and confeſſed, that it was vnpoſſible that ſo great a city ſhould be taken, vnleſſe it had bene the ſpeciall will of God. Their boaſting therefore, and confidence in their owne falſe opinion deceiued them. Howbeit the Lord did more earneſtly and deepely conſider the matter then they, when he ſayd: O Ieruſalem, if thou kneweſt thoſe thinges that are knowe to me, thou wouldeſt haue a care of thy peace (peace in the Scriptures is, when the matters and affaires of any haue good ſucceſſe) thou thinkeſt that thou haſt glad and merie dayes, that it is well with thee, and that thy affaires are in a proſperous ſtate: but if thou kneweſt howe thine enemies ſhall by ſiege afflict thee, keepe thee in on euery ſide, and bring thee into ſuch diſtreſſe, that they ſhall make thee euen with the ground, deſtroy all thy buildings, and leaue not a ſtone vpon a ſtone, thou wouldeſt ſurely conueniently receiue the word, whereby thou mighteſt enioy both true peace, and all good things. The reading of the hiſtorie of the deſtruction of this citie doth make much to the right vnderſtanding of this text.

The careles ſecuritie of the Iewes.

God had plainly ſo ordained, that at the feaſt of Eaſter, at which time they came to Ieruſalem out of all quarters, the citie ſhould be beſieged, and there were then gathered togither, as Ioſephus reporteth, about thirty hundred thouſand me, vpon whom the Lord would ſhew his grieuous indignation and wrath. All the Apoſtles and Chriſtians were departed and gone into the cuntrie of Herod, not farre from Ieruſalem. The Lord tooke out the wheate, and put the chaffe togither on an heape, nowe there was ſo great a multitude of people, that they might ſeeme to exceede not only a citie, but euen a kingdom. And they were driuen into ſo great calamitie, that al their vittells were ſpent, and none

A deſcription of Gods wrath and moſt grieuous vengeance poured vpon the Iewes for their contempt & diſobediēce.

at

at all lest vnto them, so that they were constrained to eate ẏ strings of their bowes, & olde shoes, dressing them in such maner as they could, yea through the exceeding famine, they were driuen to kill their owne children: the Souldiers tooke the flesh of children rosted from the mothers, smelling the sauour of the rosted flesh twe streetes of: Pigeons dunge was vnto them in steede of salte, and was also very deare: finally, there was so great miserie, so great slaughter and shedding of blood, that it would not haue been meruell for a stone to haue been moued with pittie. He that had seene it, would haue thought that God could not haue been so grieuously angrie, and so greatly haue afflicted a people. Both houses and streets were filled with carkases dead through famine, Notwithstanding the Iewes remained stil so obstinate and without vnderstanding, that they glozied of God, and would not yeelde themselues vntill the Emperour set vpon them with his whole power, and tooke the citie, which they were able to keepe no longer. And when as some of them were so craftie, that they deuoured golde that it might not be take frō them, the Romane souldiers thought that they had also so done, wherupon they slewe about two thousand, and hauing ript their bellies sought for golde. There was such a slaughter & manquelling made, that it seemed a miserable thing euen to the Gentiles, wherefore Cesar commaunded that they should not be so slaine, but led captiue and sould. The Iewes were then sould so cheape, that thirtie were bought for a penney, they were then dispersed through the whole world, & were counted the most abiect people of all other, as also at this day they are the most contemptible nation in the earth. For they liue spread here and there, without cities and countries of their owne, neither can they be againe gathered together into one place, so that they shall neuer be able any more to erect their Priesthood and Kingdome, as they hope they shall.

Thus God reuenged the death of Christ, & all the Prophetes, thus were they recompensed for that they knewe not the time of their visitation. Wherefore let vs be here admonished, for it belongeth not onely vnto vs, but euen vnto all Germanie. It is no iesting matter or sport, neither is there any cause why we shoulde perswade our selues that it will fall out otherwise with vs. The Iewes would not beleeue that euyll should come vpon them vntil they had sufficiently tried it. And we at this day are visited by the

The example of the Iewes ought to admonish and moue other to know the time of their visitation.

benefite of God: he hath opened vnto vs a treasure, his sacred and holy Gospell, whereby we know his will, and see how much we were subiect to the power of Satan: but no man wil receiue this Gospell, yea we contemne it, and that which is more miserable, we persecute and blaspheme it. God is patient: it pleaseth him to trie vs a while: if we be not watchful, so that the word be againe taken from vs, the same wrath and indignation which was poured forth vpon the Iewes, shal also be poured forth vpon vs. For there is the same Word, the same God, the same Christ at this day, that there was at that time, whereupon vndoutedly the punishment shal be the same, or at the least as grieuous both in soule and body.

We make almost a sporte trifling matter of the Gospell. For no man embraceth it from his hart, no man frameth his maners according vnto it. Which is a manifest argument of blindnes. O thing surely most miserable. I feare least the matter will shortly come to that passe, that all Germanie will fall together vpon an heape, which (alas) in part of the communaltie hath already had a lamentable beginning, we haue lost a great multitude of people, almost an hundred thousand men haue bin slaine onely betweene the feasts of Easter and Whitsontide. It is a hard worke of God, and I feare me the warre begun is not yet at an ende, this is onely a forewarning and threatning wherby God would terrifie vs, that we might diligently take heede to our selues: it was nothing but the Fores taple, if he come againe with his whippe, he will scourge vs more grieuously. But we will behaue our selues as the Iewes behaued them selues, vntill there shall be place for no succour nor helpe. Now we might preuent it, now were the time to knowe what shoulde be best for vs, and to receiue the Gospell with peare, for at this day grace is offered vnto vs, whereby we may liue peaceably, but we suffer day to passe after day, peare after peare, applying our selues lesse to the Gospel then before. No man doth now pray vnto God for ꝑ increase of his word, no man receiueth it in his hart. If so be that the time shall passe, no prayers shal any more helpe. We wey not this matter in our hart, we thinke our selues safe, we do not throughly perceiue the great miserie already comt to passe, neither do we consider in our mindes, how miserably God punisheth vs with false prophets and sects, which he on euery side sendeth vnto vs, which preach so securely,

as

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, WHEREIN IS ENTREATED OF THE LAWE AND THE GOSPEL, AND OF THE DIFFERENCE betweene them.

Luke. 10.

Verse 23. AND he turned to his Diſciples and ſayd ſecretly, Bleſſed are the eyes, which ſee that ye ſee.

24. For I tell you that many Prophets and Kinges haue deſired to ſee thoſe thinges, which ye ſee, and haue not ſeene them: and to heare thoſe thinges which ye heare, and haue not heard them.

25. Then behold, a certaine Lawyer ſtoode vp and tempted him, ſaying: Maiſter, what ſhall I doe to inherite eternall life?

26. And he ſayd vnto him: VVhat is written in the Law? how readeſt thou?

27. And he aunſwered and ſayd, Thou ſhalt loue thy Lord God with all thine hart, and with all thy ſoule, and with all thy ſtrength, and with all thy minde, and thy neighbour as thy ſelfe.

28. Then he ſayd vnto him: Thou haſt aunſwered right: this doe, and thou ſhalt liue.

29. But he willing to iuſtifie him ſelfe, ſayd vnto Ieſus, VVho is then my Neighbour?

30. And Ieſus aunſwered and ſaid: A certaine man went downe from Hieruſalem to Iericho, & fell among theeues, & they robbed him of his rai-

ment, and wounded him, and departed, leauing him halfe dead.

31. Nowe so it fell out, that there came downe a certaine Priest that same way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32. And likewise also a Leuite when he was come neare to the place, went and looked on him, & passed by on the other side.

33. Then a certaine Samaritan, as he iornied, came neare vnto him, and when he sawe him, he had compassion on him.

34. And went to him, and bound vp his woundes, and poured in oyle and wine, and put him on his owne beast, and brought him to an Inne, & made prouision for him.

35. And on the morrowe when he departed, he tooke out two pence, & gaue them to the host, and said vnto him, Take care of him, and whatsoeuer thou spendest more, whē I come again, I will recompence thee.

36. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour vnto him that fel amōg the theeues?

37. And he sayd, He that shewed mercie on him, Then sayd Iesus vnto him: Goe, and doe thou likewise.

I hope well that ye doe nowe rightly vnderstande this Gospell, forasmuch as it is preached of euery yeere: notwithstanding, because occasion is now againe offered, we must againe intreat and preach of it. First the Euangelist sayth, that Christ tooke his Disciples aside, and sayd vnto them secretly after this sort: Blessed are the eyes which see that ye see. For I tel you that many Prophets and Kinges haue desired to see those things which ye see, and haue not seene them, & to heare those things which ye heare, and haue not heard them. To see and heare is to be

vnderstode

vnderstoode here simply of the outward seeing and hearing, to witte, that they sawe Christ come in the flesh, heard his sermons, and were present at those miracles which he did among the Iewes. The Iewes saw the same accoyding to the flesh, yea and felt them also: yet did they not truely acknowledge him foy Christ, as the Apostles did, and especially Peter in the name of all the rest did confes him, saying: Thou art Christ the Sonne of the liuing God. We graunt in deede, that there were some among the Iewes, which acknowledged him, as the Apostles did, but the number of them was very small, wherefoye he taketh his Apostles here seuerally vnto himselfe. Many Prophetes and Kinges haue seene Christ, howbeit in the spirit, as the Loyd himsefe sayth to the Iewes of Abyaham, Ioh. 8. Your Father Abraham reioyced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad. The Iewes thought then that he had spoken of the bodily seeing, but he spake of the spirituall seeing, whereby all Christian hartes did behold him, befoye he was boyne. Foy if Abyaham saw him, vndoutedly many other of the Prophetes, in whom ỳ holy Ghost was, saw him also. And although this seeing saued the holy Fathers and Prophets, yet did they alwayes with most inward and hartie affection desire to see Christ in the flesh also, as is commonly shewed in the Prophets. Wherefoye the Loyd sayth here vnto his Disciples, which sawe him both in the flesh, and in the spirit: Blessed are the eyes which see those thinges that ye see. As if he sayd: Now is the acceptable yere and time of grace: The matter which is now in hand is so weighty and precious, that the eyes are woythely said to be blessed, which see it. Foynow was the Gospell preached openly and manifestly both by Christ himselfe, & also by his Apostles, whereupon he here calleth them all blessed, which see & heare such grace. Of which grace I haue preached much and a long time vnto you, I would to God ye did keepe that which I haue spoken thereof, freshe in memoyie.

Howe the faithfull saw Christ before his incarnation.

When the Loyd spake these thinges, a certaine Lawyer start vp, shewing himselfe as though he had bin some thing, who tempting the Loyd sayth: Maister, What shall I do to inherit eternall life? This Lawyer was endued with wisedome, & not vnskilful of the Scriptures, which euen his answere doth declare, yet in this place he is proued a foole, yea he is brought vnto shame & ignominie. Foy Christ taketh away al his glosying euen in one woyd,

He was of this minde, that he had obserued the whole Lawe, and that he was a certaine chiefe one in respect of other, as vndoutedly he was, and thought himselfe sufficient worthy by reason of his godlines & learning to be conuersaunt with the Lord. But what doth the Lord in this case? the text folowing declareth.

And he sayd vnto him, What is written in the Lawe? how readest thou? And he aunswered and sayd: Thou shalt loue thy Lord God with all thine hart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy strength, and with all thy minde, and thy neighbour as thy selfe. Then he said vnto him, Thou hast aunswered right: do this, & thou shalt liue. He thinkes that the Lord gaue this good man a hard lesson: he dealeth very straitly with him, it may seeme to some that he should haue spared him a litle, he putteth him to shame openly before al: he proueth that he had done nothing, who notwithstanding thought that he had done all thinges. He asked what he should do: but I thinke he had enough and ouermuch to do, if he had bin able to do more then he was. If I had time, manie things might be spoken of these two commaundements. For they are the chiefe and greatest commaundementes in Moses, on which the whole Lawe, and all the Prophets do hang, as Christ himselfe sayth in Matthew: Notwithstanding we will entreat somewhat of them. If we consider all the commaundementes of Moses, they haue respect altogither vnto loue. For this commaundement: Thou shall haue none other gods in my sight, we can no otherwise declare or interpret, then, Thou shalt loue God alone, so Moses expoundeth it in Deuteronomie, where he sayth thus: Heare O Israell, the Lord our God is Lord onely. And thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine hart, with all thy soule, & with all thy might: from whence the Lawyer tooke his aunswere. But the Iewes vnderstand this commaundement so, that they thinke it to extende no farther, then that they should not set vp, nor worship Idols. And if they can say and witnes in mouth, that they haue one God onely, and doe worship none but him, they thinke they haue obserued this commaundement. After the same sort did this Lawyer vnderstand it, but that was an euil and a wrong vnderstanding thereof.

Matth.22.40.

Deut.6.4.5.

How the first cõmaundement is to be

Howbeit we must otherwise consider & vnderstãd this precept: Thou shalt haue none other Gods in my sight. Thou, it sayth, with all that thou art, but especially it requireth all thine hart, soule,

pilgrimages to saincts, which did alwayes make ỹ state of Christianitie worse. This is the world which is painted foorth in this wounded man, he being wholy laden with sinnes, fainteth vnder so heauie a burden, and is not able to helpe him selfe.

But the Samaritane who hath fulfilled the Lawe, and is perfectly sound and whole, commeth, and doth more, then either the Priest or Leuite, he byndeth vp his woundes, poureth in oyle and wine, setteth him vpon his owne beast, bringeth him with him vnto an Inne, maketh prouision for him, and when he should depart, diligently commendeth him to the host, and leaueth with him sufficient for expenses, none of which either the Priest, or Leuite did. By the Priest the holy Fathers are signified, which flourished before Moses. The Leuite is a representation of the Priesthood of the olde Testament. Now all these could doe nothing by their workes, but passed by, like vnto this Priest and Leuite. Wherefore although I had all the good workes of Noe, Abraham, yea and of all the faithfull Fathers, they would profite me nothing. The Priest and Leuite sawe that miserable man lie wounded, but they could not helpe him any thing: they saw him lie halfe dead, but what was that to the purpose? they could not giue him any remedy. The holy Fathers saw men drowned and plunged in sinnes euen vp to the eares, they also felt the sting and anguish of sinne, but what could they doe hereunto? they could make the case worse and not better. And those were the preachers of the Law, which shewe what the world is, namely that it is full of sinne, and lieth halfe dead, and can not euen any whit helpe it selfe with his strength, reason, and free will. But Christ is that true Samaritane, who is touched with as great care of that miserable man, as of himselfe. Neither doth the Samaritane call him vnto him, for he hath no merit, but enioyeth the meere grace and mercie of Christ, who bindeth vp his woundes, and hauing great care of him, poureth in oyle and wine, that is, the whole Gospell. He poureth in oyle when grace is preached, when it is sayd: beholde O miserable man, this is thy incredulitie, this is thy condemnation, thus art thou wounded and sicke: but abyde, I will shew thee a remedy for all this: Behold, ioyne thy selfe to this Samaritane Christ the Sauiour, he will best helpe and succour thee, and beside him nothing. The nature of oyle, as ye know, is to make soft and mol-

The Priest & Leuite which passed by the woũded mã.

Christ the true Samaritane which helpeth the wounded man.

Oyle.

lisie: so the sweete and gentle preaching of the Gospell maketh my hart soft and tender toward God and my neighbour, so that I dare bestowe my body and life, for Christ and the Gospell, if God and neede so require. Sharpe wine signifieth the holy crosse of affliction, which forthwith followeth. Neither is there any cause that a Christian should looke farre about & seeke the crosse, for it sooner hangeth ouer his head then he is aware of, as Paule witnesseth. 2. Tim. 3. All that wil liue godly in Christ Iesus, shall suffer persecution. This is the cognisance & badge of this king. He that is ashamed of this cognisance, pertaineth not vnto him. Moreouer, that Samaritane putteth this wounded man vpon his owne beast: this is our Lord Iesus Christ, who beareth vs, we ly vpon his shoulders, vpō his necke & body. There is scarce a more amiable & comfortable historie in the whole Gospell, then where Christ compareth himselfe to a shepeheard, which carieth againe the lost sheepe vpon his shoulders vnto the flocke.

Wine.

The Inne whereunto the wounded man is brought, and the host to whom he is committed.

The Inne is the state of Christianitie in this worlde, wherein we must abide for a litle time. The Host is the ministers & preachers of the worde of God, and of the Gospell, whose charge is to haue care of vs. This therefore is the summe: The kingdome of Christ is a kingdome of mercy and grace, where is nothing els but alwayes to be borne and to beare. Christ beareth our defectes and infirmitie, he taketh our sinnes vpon him selfe, and beareth our fall willingly, we dayly lie vpon his necke, neither is he weeried with that bearing of vs. It is the duetie of the preachers of this kingdome, to comfort consciences, to handle them gently, to feede them with the Gospell, to beare the weake, to heale the sicke: Moreouer they ought fitly to applie the worde according to the neede of euery one. This in deede is the dutie of a true Bishop and Preacher, not to proceede by violence and iniurie, as it is the custome of our Bishops at this day, which vexe, torment, and cry out: goe to, goe to, he that will not willingly, shalbe compelled to doe it against his will. We must in no wise doe so. But a Bishop or Preacher ought to behaue himselfe as a healer of the sicke, who dealeth very tenderly with them, vttereth very louing wordes vnto them, talketh very gently with them, and bestoweth all his endeuour about them. The same must a Bishop, or Minister of any particuler Parish do, & thinke no otherwise, but that his Bishoprike or Parish is as an

Hospitall,

hospitall, wherein are such as are combred with diuerse and sundrie kindes of diseases. If Christ be thus preached, then faith and loue come togither, which fulfill the commaundemēt of loue, Now forasmuch as the knowledge of the Lawe and the Gospell, and of the difference betweene them is verie necessarie, I will intreat of them somwhat more at large.

Of the Lawe and Gospell.

I haue verie oftē admonished your brotherly charitie, that the whole Scripture deuideth it selfe into two parts: into the Lawe, and the Gospell. The Law is that which teacheth what we must do, what the will of God requireth of vs. The Gospell teacheth where that is to be receiued, which the Lawe cōmaundeth. Euen as if I seeke to take phisicke, it is one art to tell what the disease is, & an other to minister that which is good and wholesom to remedie it. So standeth the case here: The Lawe reuealeth the disease, the Gospell ministreth the medicine. Which is manifest euē by the text whereof we haue already intreated: The Lawyer commeth, and being verie desirous of eternall life, asketh what he must doe. The Lawe declareth it vnto him, saying: Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soule, with all thy strength, and with all thy minde, and thy neighbour as thy selfe. He that readeth these wordes after a bare and slender sort onely, as this Lawyer did, vnderstandeth them not. We must pearce into the Lawe, and euerie one behold his face and heart therein. God must be loued of me from the bottom of my heart: Againe, I must loue him with all my soule, that is, from the depth of my soule, so that I throughly feele in my selfe that I loue him. For to loue with the soule signifieth in the Scripture such loue as a yong man beareth toward a mayd, which he feleth throughly in his minde. Moreouer, with all my strength, that is, with all my members. Also with all my mynde, that is, all my senses, cogitations & thoughts must be directed vnto God: Now I finde in my selfe that I do nōt of these. For if I must loue God with all my heart, soule, strength and minde, it is requisite, that myne eyes shew no angrie twinckling or motiō, ỳ my toūg speak no angrie word, that my feete, handes, eares, &c. shew no signe of wrath, that my whole body euen from the crowne of the heade to the soles of the fette, & all thinges belonging thereunto, do walke

The whole Scripture deuided into the Lawe & the Gospell.

The office of the Lawe.

in charitie, be as it were rauished with loue and pleasure toward God, & alwayes serue & worship him. Wherefore who is he which by the pleasure & loue of vertue is chast & righteous? there cā not be one such fōud in ỹ earth. For we alwayes finde our selues readier to wrath, hatred, enuie, worldly pleasure &c. then to meekenes & other vertue. I finde in me not onely a sparke, but euen a fierie fornace of wicked lust: for there is no loue in myne hart, no not in all my members. Wherefore here in the Lawe as it were in a certaine glasse I see whatsoeuer is in me, to be damnable and cursed. For not one iote of the Law must perish, but all must be fulfilled, as Christ sayth: Truly I say vnto you, til heauē & earth passe, one iote or title of the Lawe shall not escape til all be fulfilled. Now thou fyndest not this in thee, that thou dost with all thy soule and heart, with cheerefulnes and pleasure, whatsoeuer the Law exacteth and requireth of thee. Hereupon thou art damned and vnder the dominion of Satan.

Matth.5.18.

The Lawe therefore serueth vs thus farre, to teach vs, that we are condemned: for by it we fynde all wicked desires in vs, and yet not so much as a sparke of them ought to be in vs. Howbeit our Schoolemen not marking this, haue taught, that if one do according to his abilitie, God doeth giue his grace vnto him. They are blynde guides: They graunt themselues, that a man is caried with no pleasure or cheerefulnes to that which is good, and yet do they also teach, if one worketh, although it be with griefe, difficultie, and slouthfulnes, that it is well with him before God. But Christ hath taught otherwise in this place, that we should worke that which is good with pleasure and loue, readines and facillitie. Whom therefore shall we rather beleeue, Christ, or the Scholemen? but I leaue that to your iudgement. Of such corrupt and euell vnderstanding of the Lawe, Monasteries afterwardes came, whereby entred in this opinion, that it was thought to be sufficient to saluation, to liue in a Monasterie, and to follow the orders thereof, although that were done euen with griefe of mynde. So they taught: But Christ will haue vs to worke with pleasure and cheerefulnes, so that if any thinge be done with burden or griefe of conscience, it is synne: remoue thy selfe therefore quickly from such a worke. Wherefore thus it might be sayd vnto them: Behold O man, thou miserable creature oughtest to be caried with a certaine diligēt to

We must worke with pleasure and cherefulnes, not with grudging or griefe.

the

the doinge of the lawe of God, but thou commeſt with no pleaſure or cheerefulnes hereunto, now ſee that thou ſhew thy pleaſure and loue herein, otherwiſe thou ſhalt be the enemie of God, and the friend of Satan: thus men leauing their owne raſhnes, might come to the knowledge of themſelues, and might then ſay: Therefore, O God, am I condemned, and that not vniuſtly. Hereupon it followeth, that we are all vnder Satan, as long as we feele in vs this difficultie and hardenes to do that which is good. Wherefore if I ſhould ſpeake the truth, I ſhould ſay thus, I fynde in deede ſomethinge that is good in the lawe of God, but it is my death, and if it could be, I would wiſh that it were not. So are all men affected in their heart, as S. Paule plainely teacheth Rom. 7. If we ſhould remaine in ſuch condemnation, we muſt needes periſh for euer.

There is therefore an other part, that is, the Goſpell, which ſheweth comfort and ſaluatiõ, declaring where that is to be had, whereby the Lawe is fulfilled. When therefore I know by the Lawe that I am a condemned man, then ly I halfe dead among theeues, Satan hath ſpoiled my ſoule, and hath moreouer in Adam taken away all faith, all righteouſnes, and hath left nothing but bodily life, which is alſo quickly extinguiſhed. Then come Leuites and Prieſtes, which teach this and that, but can helpe nothing, and ſo paſſe by. But when the Samaritane commeth, he helpeth, that is, when Chriſt commeth, he ſheweth his mercy vnto vs, ſaying after this ſort: Behold thou oughteſt in deede to loue God with all thine heart, but thou doeſt it not, now beleeue onely in me, & thou ſhalt enioy my obedience as thine owne: this onely helpeth me: Then he putteth me on his owne beaſt, that is, on himſelfe, and carieth me into the Inne, that is, into the Church of the faithfull, then he byandby poureth his grace into me, that is, oyle, that I may feele my ſelfe to be layd vpon his ſhoulder, that at the laſt maketh me to be of a good cheere, & quiet & well affected in conſcience. Afterward he poureth in wine alſo, which with his ſharpenes may abate & tame the force of old Adam. And yet am I not ſo wholy reſtored vnto health, health is in deede poured in & begun, but not yet wholy finiſhed: then Chriſt hath care of me, & by his grace poured into me, doth puriſie me, that from day to day I may become more chaſt, meeke, gentle, faithfull, &c. vntill I wholy dy, for then I ſhalbe altogither made

The office of the Goſpell.

perfect. So when we shall come to God the father, and be asked of him, whether we beleeued in God whether we loued him, &c: the Samaritane Christ our Lord, who hath layed vs on his owne beast, will cum forth and say: Loe Father, although they haue not wholy fulfilled thy Lawe, yet haue I fulfilled it, suffer thou that to turne to the commoditie of them that beleeue in me. So is it needefull that all the Saincts albeit verie holy, be layed vpon the backe of Christ. If so be that the holiest of all, as the Priestes and Ieuites could not satisfie the Lawe, how shall we go about with our fained workes, as with shauing, habit &c, to fulfill the same? O wretched & miserable calamitie. These things shall now suffize to haue bin spoken concerning this text: Let vs pray vnto God, that he will giue vs his grace.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING THE EXERCISE AND INCREASING OF FAITH.

Ioh. 4.

Verse 46. THere was a certaine ruler whose sonne was sicke at Capernaum.

47. When he heard that Iesus was cõe out of Iudea into Galile, he went vnto him, & besought him, that he would goe downe, & heale his sonne: for he was euen ready to die.

48. Then said Iesus vnto him, Except ye see signes and wonders, ye will not beleeue.

49. The

49. The ruler ſayd vnto him, Syr, goe downe before my ſonne die.

50. Ieſus ſayd vnto him, Goe thy way, thy ſonne lyueth: and the man beleeued the word that Ieſus had ſpoken vnto him, and went his waye.

51. And as he was now going downe, his ſeruaunts met him, ſaying, Thy ſonne lyueth.

52. Then enquired he of them the houre when he beganne to amende. And they ſayd vnto him, yeſterdaye the ſeuenth houre the feuer leſte him.

53. Then the father knewe that it was the ſame houre in the which Ieſus had ſayd vnto him, Thy ſonne liueth, and he beleeued, and all his houſehold.

54. This ſecond miracle did Ieſus againe, after he was come out of Iudea into Galile.

AN excellent example of faith is ſet forth in this text, of what ſort it is, of what nature and qualitie, namely, that it is not a reſting or idle thinge, but liuely and voyde of idlenes, which goeth not backe, but proceedeth on, and ſtill more and more increaſeth. Which if it be not done, it is no faith, but onely a dead opinion of God in the hart. For a true and ſincere faith, which the holy Ghoſt poureth into the hart, can not be idle: which I ſay for this cauſe, that no man be therefore ſecure, albeit he hath obtained faith, neither that he ſtay there. It is nothing to beginne, vnleſſe we increaſe by continuall going forward, and come to greater knowledge of God. For on the contrarie ſide it is the nature and qualitie of our aduerſarie Satan, not to be idle, as S. Peter ſayth: Satan ſleepeth not, but goeth about as a roring Lion, ſeeking whom he may deuoure. If ſo be that the Deuell is neither idle, neither ſleepe commeth vpon him, neither ſhall it be meete for a Chriſtian to be idle or put his handes in

A true faith is not idle, but increaſeth more and more.

his bosom, forasmuch as he hath the Deuell his enimie, who is stronger then himselfe: for he is called the prince of the worlde, as it is mentioned in the Epistle appointed to be read in the Church on this day: We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, & against the worldly gouernours, the princes of the darknes of this world, against spirituall wickednesses, which are in high places. This prince gouerneth the worlde, furiously and fiercely rageth, and can not suffer the prosperous succes of a Christian. Neither is it for his profite to be suffered of him, for an entrie being made hereby, his kingdome is burst into, and his net torne in peeces, out of which as much as he is able, he suffereth no Christian to escape. Moreouer when the fire of faith is kindled, and the flame fostered, and Satan trieth and marketh that, byandby he practizeth deceit against it, for he knoweth how much hinderaunce his kingdome shall take thereby, wherefore as earnestly as he can, euen with all his power, he defendeth his kingdome, and laboureth to keepe al in obedience to him.

Ephes.6.12.

True Christians are not free from temptation, for the deuil bendeth his force especially against them.

Wherefore it is most certaine, that when a Christian hath begon to beleeue, byandby temptation & persecution will assaile him. Which if it come not to passe, it is a signe that his faith is not yet sound, and that he hath not as yet truly receiued the Gospell. For wicked Satan hath a very sharpe sight, he byandby spieth out where is a true Christian, wherefore he applyeth himselfe wholly vnto this, that he may enforce him to fall, and may besiege him, and assaile him on euery side: for he can not suffer that any should reuolt from his kingdome. It is perilous therefore for a man to beleeue, for the Deuell is ready that he may set vpon him, and ouerthrowe him, which sometime chaunceth euen to very holy men, which vnderstand the word of God well, when they stand vpright, and thinke themselues safe, that priuie wicked feende commeth vpon him by litle and litle, and wrestleth with them so long, tyll he ouerthrowe them, and cast them to the earth. Set before thine eyes Moses and Aaron, who were guides of the Iewes, they had an excellent faith, when they brought the people out of Egypt, and all the people in faith passed through the redde Sea, death, the wide Wilderness, and many other meruelous thinges, whereby they shewed their faith, but at the last they fall grieuously, they feare that they

The Saincts of God doe sometimes fall euen grieuously.

they shall perish with hunger. Is it not a thing most miserable, that by so great signes they shew their faith, they goe into death and through death, wrastle with it, and ouercome it, and yet while they thinke them selues surest, they fall, and suffer themselues to be ouercome of the belly, murmure against God, and are so grieuously tempted, that they fall all together. Wherefore it is not certaine and sure, if one begin to beleeue, and doth not alwayes more and more increase in faith. Yea that godly man Moses, who had so great and so strong a faith, did fall also, when as he should bring water out of the rocke with a staffe, he douted, and talked thus to the people: Come, let vs see whether we can bring water out of the rocke. That good Moses, which had shewed so many and so great signes, falleth into reason and carnall vnderstanding, fearing lest the incredulitie of the people would hinder so great a miracle and signe. But it had behooued him to cleaue fast to the worde of God, and to thinke it higher, greater, stronger, & mightier, then the vnbeleefe of the people: that great man was tempted, he stumbled, and was ouerthrowne.

We haue like examples in the newe Testament: Peter was hardie, and firme in faith, when he beheld Christ vpon the water, he sayd vnto him with a strong faith: Lord suffer me to come vnto thee, committing him selfe to the water euen as to the shyp, he thought assuredly that the water would beare him. Then was there an excellent faith in Peter, and great courage, which durst commit him selfe wholly vnto death in the middest of the sea, reposing his hope freely & boldly in Christ. But when he thought him selfe most safe, a storme & tempest ariseth, he forgetting the word, suffereth his faith to faile, and he him selfe also falleth, suffering Satan to plucke faith out of his hart. Faith truely is a subtill and delicate thing, a small thing maketh to stumble and fall. Satan is alwayes watchfull, and circumspect, and doth by & by obtaine his purpose, if we doe not diligently watch. How earnestly did the common people followe Christ? they thought that he was a Prophet, and did so cleaue vnto him, and so defend him, that the Princes of the people were made astonied, neither durst they so much as lay hand on him. But when they apprehend him, procede against him, fasten him to the crosse, the people forsake him all that they may, and come no more at him. A Prophet is present, and no man any more afflicteth him, but they rather crie

Let him that thinketh he standeth take heede lest he fall.

out against him, crucifie him, crucifie him: and that which is most detestable of all, his owne Disciples reuolt from him. What is become now both of their faith and holines?

So is it at this day in our time: at the first when the Gospell began to shine, the preaching thereof was acceptable and pleasant, then many seemed willing to embrace it, but when Munkes, sacrificing Priestes, Nunnes, &c. began to be spoken against, and the Masse to be confuted, all (a merueilous thing to be spoken) fel away as leaues of trees. Againe, when Princes also were touched, the Gospell suffered greater persecution, and did by litle and litle dayly decrease. Moreouer Satan is not idle, whereupon he stirreth vp heresies and schismes, for how many sectes haue we hitherto suffered? he sleepeth not, he will stirre vp greater mischieles also, he neuer resteth, but looketh about, and trieth euery way, that he may bring the matter to that passe, and preuaile so farre, that no sound doctrine may remaine in the Church, but that if all Germanie be diligently viewed, a Sermon may no where be found, wherein the word of God is truely preached, as it was before. He goeth about to extinguish and abolish all the doctrine of Christ now increasing, for he can not abide it. It is not an easie thing to auoid so great an enimie, he lyeth in waite, and vieweth all places, and so diligently bestirreth him selfe, that euen the learned fall, and the elect stumble, as Moses, S. Peter, with the rest of the Apostles. We thinke our selues safe, and liue securely, no man considereth, no man hath a care of the worde, we should pray & beseech God, that he would vouchsafe to preserue the Gospell, and make his holy name to be spred and published more abroad. But no man is touched with care hereof, no man prayeth that it may haue good successe. Wherefore it is to be feared, that at the last it will come to passe, that God will suffer Satan and vs to runne togither into one, then shall we be in a desperate case, for he will easily throw vs to the grounde, when we are come into so great miserie by our owne slouthfulnes and default.

Satan moreouer can so sette forth the matter by seditious spi-
rites, that men shall thinke it to be iust. As the Arrians were per-
swaded that their opinion was sound. But a Christian humbleth
him selfe, taketh nothing rashly vpon him selfe, but with an hum-
ble hart sayth thus vnto God: Moste gratious God, albeit I
knowe that the cause which I fauour is not vniust, yet without

We must not trust to our owne strēgth but to the helpe & assistāce of God

thy

thy helpe I am not able to maintaine it, thou therefore helpe me, otherwise I shall be cast and ouerthrowne. He is in deed certaine of his cause, euen as S. Peter was on the water, who could not be surer, when the water did beare him. For he knewe no let or hinderance, but when the wind was great, and the water troubled, he perceiued what was wanting in him: Which is throughly to be receiued into our mide, and considered of vs. For albeit the certaintie of our cause be confirmed, strengthned, and ratified with plaine sentences of the Scripture, yet is it by the might, counsell, and power of God, that we are defended, and Satan our chiefe aduersarie and enemy repressed. Which is therefore done that God may stirre vs vp to watch, & keepe vs in awe, that we may alwayes be watchfull, and crie vnto him: Lorde helpe vs, & increase our faith, for without thee we are able to doe nothing. Our heart must be alwayes so disposed, as though we began to day to beleeue, and alwayes so affected, that we desire and labour to goe more and more forward. For that is the nature, force, and qualitie of faith, that it alwayes increaseth and waxeth stronger. Satan, as it is a litle before mentioned, neither, is idle nor resteth, if he be once ouerthrowne he riseth againe, if he can not enter in by the doore, he endeuoureth to steale in on the backe side, & if this be not permitted him, he breaketh in through the roofe, or entereth in through a hollow place digged vnder the threshold, for he doth so long earnestly follow his worke, vntill he come in, he vseth many deceits and practises, if he preuaileth not by one, he taketh in hand an other, and doth that so long, vntil he hath obtained his purpose. Man is a weake and a miserable thing, as S. Paule sayth. 2. Cor. 4. We haue this treasure in earthen vessels. I am more fraile then a pot compared to the potter, and a pot is a very weake thinge, inasmuch as it is easily broken, and whatsoeuer is in it, is spilt.

Now Satan when he marketh how great a treasure faith is, kept in a fraile pot (that I may so speake) he is in a great rage & furie, and sayth thus vnto vs: I will touch thee, I will breake thy potte, thou hast a great treasure, which I will spill. So God setteth the silly pot in the middest of enemies, which should vtterly perish euen in a momẽt, if he did not defend it, for it may quickly be shaken and broken in peeces, yea if it be but bitten of a viper, it perisheth. And it is not hard for Satan euen in one mo-

Though we be of our selues most fraile and weake, yet God setteth

ment to waste and destroy a whole cõtry. Wherfore that vexeth him, that God dealeth with him so simply, setting a silly potte against him, when as he notwithstanding is so greate a Prince and the most mighty ruler of this worlde. Now it would grieue me, if I being stronge and valiant, any man should set vpon me with a reede, surely I being moued with anger would breake the reede in peeces: for I had leuer that he would set vpon me wt a speare, sword, and armed on all partes. It grieued stout Goliath, that Dauid durst come vnto him vnarmed onely with a staffe. So it greatly grieueth the deuill, that God will suppresse him by flesh & blood, if some stout spirit should resist him, it would not grieue him so much, for that troubleth him aboue measure, that a silly worme, a fraile pot should come to dispise him, an earthen vessell against a most mighty Prince. God hath layd vp this treasure, sayth Paul, in a miserable and weake vessell: for man is a weake creature, byandby moued to wrath, to couetousnes, to pride, &c. so that Satan may easily shake and breake the vessell: for if God would permit him, he woulde forthwith breake it all to peeces. Now all this is done, sayth Paul, that we may know, that not by our own power, but by the power of God we are preserued from all euills, and especially from the force and furie of Satan, who goeth about like a roring lyon, desiring to bruse and breake the weake vessells and fraile pots: and that we may hereby also be stirred vp to be watchfull and to lift vp our eyes toward heauen, and pray vnto God that he will vouchsafe to increase and defend our faith, and preserue the vessell by his strength. Thus haue we an entrance vnto our text, it remaineth that we doe now consider the same in order: The Euangelist sayth thus:

vs in the middest of most stronge enemies that it may appeare that we stand not by our owne strength, but by the singular helpe & assistance of God.

There was a certaine ruler whose sonne was sicke at Capernaum. It falleth out with many other men also, that they haue their children sicke: but that which he sayth afterward is to be marked: When he heard that Iesus was come out of Iudea into Galile, he went vnto him, and besought him that he woulde goe downe, and heale his sonne: for, he was euen ready to dye. Here faith beginneth and trusteth in Christ. Now that he had faith the Gospell declareth: for he heard of Christ how he healed the sicke, thereupon his hart was set vpon him, and he resorteth vnto him: thinking thus: If he helpeth all men he will also helpe me, and will heale my sonne. He counteth Christ for such a man

as

as is able to helpe men, and hopeth and promiseth to him selfe all goodnes from him: and that in deede is a true Christian hart, which cleaueth fast vnto God. If that this ruler had stoode in a place or way hauing two pathes, douting with him selfe, he had not gone vnto Christ, but his hart would haue bene thus affected: He helpeth others in deede, but who can tel, whether he will help me also? Howbeit he doth not thus dout of Christ, but riseth, and maketh hast vnto him. This is the beginning of faith, now ye shal see how Christ meeteth him on the other side, and answereth otherwise then he thought for, that his faith might be tried, and thus he sayth vnto him:

Except ye see signes and wonders ye wil not beleeue. Christ sayd also to S. Peter. Matth. 14. Why doost thou dout, O thou of litle faith? Peter vndoutedly had faith, & did beleue in Christ, whereupon he committed him selfe to the water, but when he saw the winde, he was afraide, and beganne to be drowned: so in this place, that good man heareth a good report of Christ, that he helpeth euery man, which he beleeueth and therefore resorteth vnto him. But when he heareth that Christ denieth to come, he stumbleth, and his faith faileth, fearing that Christ would not come vnto him. This is as it were an assault & sore blowe, here his new begun faith beginneth to be tempted. It was a hard saying: except ye see signes and wonders, ye will not beleeue: which saying doth so tempt him, and bring him into dout, that he almost faileth. Satan standing at his backe, sayth vnto him: get thee home and looke to thy busines, for he will not helpe thee. Notwithstanding the ruler did not by and by leaue of, but prayed the Lorde moreouer: Lorde come downe before my sonne dye. Here his faith began to be in daunger & to faile, but God doth not forsake him, but lifteth him vp againe, and sayth vnto him:

Goe thy way, thy sonne liueth. If the ruler had not had faith, he woulde not haue requested Christ to come to his sonne. What therefore doth he want? euen this: he beleeued if Christ came to his house, he coulde then helpe his sonne, if he did not come, he could not helpe him. Neither did his fayth extende so farre, as to beleeue that Christ euen being absent could heale the sicke: but it behoueth that he should haue a higher faith. Wherfore Christ lifteth him vp, and setteth him in a higher state, and sayth vnto him: Goe thy way, thy sonne liueth. Here he first ascendeth from his

former faith, whereby he beleeued that Christ could heale being present, and commeth to a higher faith, so that now he beleeueth the word. For if he had not beleeued the word, he would not haue left Christ, neither would haue departed from him, vntill he had come with him to his house. But hauing layd holde on the word, he cleaueth vnto it by faith, for his sonne is at home, and Christ is with his father. Wherefore the Father receiueth this word in his heart, and thinketh with him selfe after his sort: My sonne is sicke, but I shall find him whole: which faith was contrary both to reason & experience. Reason would haue thought thus: When I came from my sonne he was sicke, as I did leaue him, so shal I find him. But faith sayth, otherwise, it resteth onely in the word & trusteth wholy vnto it, neither douteth it, that any thing will fall out otherwise then the worde speaketh: Goe thy way, thy sonne liueth. This is a right and stronge faith, when as a man leaueth sense, wisedome, reason, and trusteth wholy, to the worde of God. Christ sayth, thy sonne liueth: And he sayth with him selfe, without dout it is true, I shall so finde it. So faith remayneth not idle, nor resteth, but increaseth and goeth forward.

True faith leaueth all wisedom and reason, and trusteth to the onely word of God.

Thus Christ dealeth with vs also, he suffereth vs to be tempted, that we may increase in faith: if in the ende of our life when we must dye, we shall haue but a sparke of such faith, we shall be in a good case, as Christ sayth vnto his Disciples Matth. 17: If ye haue faith as much as is a graine of mustard seede, ye shal say vnto this mountaine: Remoue hence to yonder place, & it shall be remoued: and nothing shal be vnpossible vnto you. A graine of musterd seede is but a smal thing, but he that hath faith agreeable to the smalnes of this graine, shall be saued. Neither must we so much consider this, that our faith is litle, but we must looke vnto this, we must haue regard vnto this, that the graine of musterd seede do remaine, and be not eaten vp of the birdes, that Satan plucke not faith out of our hearts. We must not looke howlitle the faith is, but we must regarde and take heede that faith be not taken away. Peter had faith vpon the sea, and therefore was he caried of the water, that he should not be drowned, if he had so perseuered in faith, he might well haue walked an hundred miles vpon the sea, but when he fayled in faith, he began to be drowned. So Moses had a stronge faith, but he fell from it. It consisteth not in the strength or slendernes of faith, that we do stand, but in perse-

perſeuering and remaining faithfull. It may be that he ſhall perſeuer in faith, which hath but a ſlender faith, and he that hath a ſtrong faith ſhall fall and dout. Moſes and Peter had an excellent faith, ſo that Moſes by faith did leade ỳ people through the middeſt of the ſea and death, and Peter without douting went downe out of the ſhyp into the ſea, but they fell from their faith, howbeit God raiſeth them vp quickly again. But the Theefe on the croſſe hauing once layd hold of faith, continued conſtant. Now God therefore ſuffereth it to be thus, that he may bring downe raſh arrogancie, that we do not gloriouſly extoll our ſelues, but alwayes remaine in feare & awe. For when temptation commeth vpon vs, we do forthwith fall into errour, if God do not aſſiſt & ſtrengthen vs, of which thing we may ſee a very goodly ſimilitude in a tree, which in the Spring time buddeth and openeth it ſelfe, ſo that it doth as it were become white by reaſon of the bloſſoms. A ſhewer falling vpon it, many of the bloſſoms are ſhaken of, and the froſt alſo doth much more conſume them. Afterward when the fruite beginneth to ſpring forth, ſome great winde blowing, much of it being newly come forth falleth downe, and when it waxeth ripe, the Caterpiller commeth, which with other Wormes gnaweth & ſpoyleth it ſo much, that ſcarce the twentieth part, yea ſcarce the hundreth part many times remaineth. The ſame commeth to paſſe with the hearers of the Goſpell, in the beginning thereof euery one coueteth to be a true Chriſtian, euery one liketh of it very well, and the firſt fruites thereof are very pleaſant. But when winde, a ſhewer, or temptation commeth, all fall away from it by companies: afterwards ſects and ſeditions ariſe, which like vnto wormes and kankers gnaw and infect the frutes of the Goſpell, and ſo many falſe opinions ſpring vp, that very fewe do perſeuer in the true profeſſion of the Goſpell.

A proper & apt ſimilitude.

We haue here, thankes be giuen to Almighty God, the word of God plentifully taught, we are deliuered out of deepe & great darkenes, but we forgetting the worde are made weake, we liue hauing no care of the word, for it is not ſauory vnto vs. But when as hereafter falſe prophetes ſhall breake in with their corrupt opinions, and Satan alſo ſhall violently aſſaile vs, finding vs idle, and the houſe ſwept and garniſhed, he will bring with him ſeuen other ſpirites worſe then him ſelfe, and the end ſhal be worſe then the beginning. Which thinges if they ſo fall out, let vs not there-

fore be quite discouraged, but let vs rather instruct one another, that we may learne to cleaue vnto God, and pray vnto him, and say: Mercifull God, thou hast giuen vnto me to become a Christian, giue vnto me also that I may persever, and become dayly richer in faith. Albeit the whole worlde did resist, and euery one conspired to destroy the Gospell, yet will I be nothing moued, but by thy diuine helpe will depend on the Gospell.

They which beleeue shall assuredly obtaine al good thinges that they pray vnto God for.

But to returne againe to the Ruler, ye haue heard that his faith was very notable and excellent, he heareth the worde, Thy sonne liueth, he beleeueth it, and goeth away giuing honour to God, he receiueth the only word, he trusteth wholly vnto it. Hereupō God dealeth so graciously with him, that he restoreth health vnto his sonne, raiseth him vp, and strengtheneth him in faith, neither suffereth him to sticke in dout or infirmitie, but establisheth him, and maketh him strong, and causeth him to goe forward & increase. Neither doth God delay vntill he commeth home, but declareth vnto him being yet in his iourney, the health of his sonne, sending his seruauntes to meete him, that they might bring him good newes, and say: thy sonne liueth. For God can not differre or delay, where there is a sincere hart, which trusteth in him alone, all other thinges being left, looking onely vnto the word of God, there God can not hide him selfe, but reuealeth him selfe, and commeth vnto such a hart, & make this abode there, as the Lord sayth Ioh. 14. Now what can be more ioyful, thē for a mā to giue credite to the word of God, & to be plucked from it by no affliction or tentation, but to shut his eyes against euery assault of Satan, to lay aside humane sense, vnderstanding, reason, & wisedome, and to say dayly in his hart: God hath spoken it, he can not lye. I say nothing is more ioyfull then such a faith. For whatsoeuer we aske of God with such a faith, we receiue it more aboundantly of him, then euer we desired it, and God is sooner present with vs, then we had thought. Hereupon the Euangelist useth so many wordes euen vnprofitable, as it appeareth vnto vs, as these: The man beleeued the worde that Iesus had spoken vnto him, and went his way. And as he was now going downe, his seruauntes met him, saying, Thy sonne liueth. Then inquired he of them the houre when he began to amend: and they sayd vnto him: Yesterday the seuenth houre the Feuer left him. Then the Father knew, that it was the same houre in the which Iesus sayd vnto him:

him: Thy ſonne liueth. All which tende vnto this ende, that we ſhould know that if we beleeue in the Lord he will giue vs abundātly, whatſoeuer we ſhall pray vnto him for.

The concluſion the Euangeliſt maketh as followeth: And he beleeued and all his houſhold. He ſo increaſed in faith, that he did not onely aſcend from a low ſtate to an higher, but he brought others alſo vnto faith. He had ſurely an effectuall faith, which did not reſt idle and ſlouthfull in the hart, but did breake forth, ſo that whoſoeuer were in his houſe were brought vnto faith. For this is plainely the nature of faith, this is the qualitie of it, to drawe others vnto it, to burſt forth, and apply it ſelfe euen vnto the worke of loue, as S. Paule witneſſeth Gala. 5. That faith which worketh by loue, is effectuall. For it can not keepe ſilence or be idle, as Dauid ſayth Pſal 116. which place Paule applieth to the faithful 2. Cor. 4. I beleeued and therefore haue I ſpoken. Faith can do no other, for it is enforced to ſpeake, neither can it keepe ſilence, in aſmuch as he that is endued with it, endeuoureth to profit his neighbour. This ruler had faith for him ſelfe, but it doth not remaine in him alone, but breaketh forth. For without all dout he declared to his familie, how he came vnto Chriſt, and receiued comfort of him, which they alſo beleeued: So we alſo, whē we beleeue muſt open our mouth, and confeſſe the grace, which God hath ſhewed vnto vs. Which is the chiefe and moſt excellent worke of faith, that one inſtruct an other in the worde. For Paul ſayth Rom. 10: With the hart man beleeueth vnto righteouſnes, and with the mouth man confeſſeth to ſaluation. If we be aſhamed of this word, it is a certaine argument of a very light & vncertaine faith. We ſee therfore that there is no difference with Chriſt betwene the ſtrong and the weake in faith: for a litle faith is faith alſo. He therefore came into the world that he might receiue to him ſelfe, beare and ſuſteine the weake. If he were ſo impatient as we be, he would by and by ſay vnto vs: Get thee from me, I will none of thee, becauſe thou beleeueſt not in me. But this is a thing greatly to be cōmended, when one can handle ẏ weake gently, and doth not deale rigorouſly with them, and repell them by impatiencie. For although they be weake to day, the houre may come, when they ſhall receiue the word more aboundantly then we. Thus we ought to inſtruct and teach one an other, that we may depend on ẏ word of God. For if we continue in ſticking

The nature and qualitie of true faith.

The moſt excellent work of faith.

to the word, we shall be stronge enough for the deuill: for we glory of the word, albeit we be but weake. Unto Satan, who is able euen in one houre to ouerthrow vs all, all men should be euen as a fether, which he would be able to remoue away how and when he will, yea euen with his breath, but if we beleeue, that fether is made more heauy vnto him then the hill Olympus. For a Christian beareth Christ in him selfe, and Christ is heauier then heauen and earth. Thus much may suffize concerning this text.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, CONCERNING FREE REMISSION OF SINNES TO THE CONTRITE AND BROKEN IN heart, and terrible iudgement to the indurate and obstinate.

Matth. 18.

Verse 23. IEsus sayd vnto Peter & to the rest of the Disciples: The kingdom of heauen is likened vnto a certaine King which would take an accoũt of his seruaunts.

24. And when he had begun to recken, one was brought vnto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25. And becausse he had nothing to pay, his Lord commaunded him to be solde, and his wife, & his children, and all that he had, and the dette to be payd.

26. The seruaunt therefore fell downe, and worshipped him saying: Lord refraine thine anger toward, me and I will pay thee all.

27. Then that seruaunts Lord had compassion, & loosed

looſed him, and forgaue him the dette.

28. But the ſame ſeruant went out, & found one of his fellow ſeruaunts, which owed him an hundred pence, and he layed handes on him, and thratled him, ſaying: Pay me that thou oweſt.

29. Then his fellow ſeruaunt fel downe at his feete, and beſought him, ſaying: Refraine thine anger towards me, and I will pay thee all.

30. Yet he would not, but went and caſt him into priſon, till he ſhould pay the dette.

31. And when his other fellow ſeruaunts ſaw what was done, they were very ſory, and came, and declared vnto their Lord all that was done.

32. Then his Lord called him vnto him, and ſayd to him: O euill ſeruaunt, I forgaue thee all that debt, becauſe thou prayedſt me.

33. Oughteſt not thou alſo to haue had pitie on thy felow ſeruaunt, euen as I had pitie on thee?

34. So his Lord was wrath, and deliuered him to the tormentors, till he ſhould pay all that was due to him.

35. So likewiſe ſhall myne heauenly Father doe vnto you, except ye forgiue from your hartes, ech one to his brother their treſpaſſes.

CHriſt brought forth this parable vnto that aunſwere which he had made to Sainct Peter, vnto whom he had before committed the keies of binding and looſing. For when S. Peter aſked him, howe oft he ſhould forgiue his brother his offence, whether it were enough to forgiue him ſeuen times, & he aunſwered, not ſeuen times, but ſeuenty times ſeuen times, he then added this ſimilitude, by which he inferreth, that his heauenly father will do likewiſe vnto vs, if we do not forgiue our neighbour, euen as the King did here vnto the ſeruaunt, which would not forgiue his fellow ſeruant a ſmall det, when as

his Lord had forgiuen him so much. We haue oftē times taught that the kingdom of God wherein he reigneth by the Gospell, is nothing els, but such a state or gouernment, wherin is meere forgiuenes of sinnes: so that where such a gouernment is not, wherin sinne is pardoned, neither is there the Gospell nor kingdome. Wherefore those two kingdoms are to be separated: one, wherein sinnes are punished, & an other wherin they are forgiuen, or wherin the law is exacted, & wherein that which is due by the lawe, is remitted. In the kingdom of God, where he reigneth by the Gospell, there is no exacting of the lawe, neither any dealing by the law, but onely remission and forgiuenes, neither wrath nor punishing, but brotherly seruice and well doing one to an other. Notwithstanding the ciuill law or Magistrate is not taken away, for this parable speaketh not any thing of worldly gouernment, but of the kingdom of God only. Wherefore he that is yet gouerned onely by the regiment of the world, is yet farre of from the kingdom of heauen, for worldly gouernment pertaineth wholy to inferiour thinges. As if a Prince gouerne his people so, that he suffer iniurie to be done to none, punishing offenders, he doth wel, & is therfore cōmended. For in that gouernment this sentence flourisheth: Pay that thou owest: which if thou doe not, thou shalt be cast into prison. Such gouernmēt we must haue, howbeit we cōe not to heauen by it, neither is the world therefore saued, but this gouernment is therefore necessary, that the world do not become worse. For it is only a defence & fortification against wickednes, which if it were not, one would deuoure an other, neither could any man keepe in safetie his owne life, wife, goods, children, &c. That therfore all things should not fal, come to ruine, and perish, God hath appointed the sword of the magistrate, whereby wickednes may be partly repressed, peace and quietnes among men maintained & one may not doe an other iniurie, wherefore this is in any wise to be kept. But, as I sayd, it is not ordained for them that are in the kindom of grace, but therefore onely, that men be not more deepely plunged in wickednes, and become worse.

The kingdō of grace.

Ciuill gouernment.

Wherefore no man that is onely vnder the regiment of the world, ought to glorie, that he doth therefore wel before God, before whom all is yet vnrighteous. For thou must come so farre that thou doe resigne that which is iust before ỳ world, & yeeld of thine owne right. This the Gospell doth here require, which on either

either side setteth forth vnto vs onely forgiuenes. First the Lord forgiueth the seruaunt all the dette: then he requireth of him, that he forgiue his fellow seruaunt his, and remit his offence. These thinges God requireth, and so must his kingdom be ordered: that no man be so wicked, neither suffer him selfe so to be moued, that he can not forgiue his neighbour. And as it is a litle before this text taught in the Gospel, if he should prouoke thee to anger euen seuenty times seuen times, that is as oft̄ as he can offend against thee, thou must yeelde of thine owne right, & cheerefully forgiue him all thinges. Why so? because Christ did the same. For he set vp & erected such a kingdome, as wherein is onely grace, which must at no time ceasse, so that if thou repent all things may wholy be forgiuen the, as often as thou shalt offend, forasmuch as he hath ordained the Gospell, that it might preache no punishment but onely grace & forgiuenes of sinnes. This kingdom standing, thou maist alwayst rise againe, how deepely soeuer thou fallest, & so often as thou fallest, so as thou repent. For albeit thou fallest, yet this Gospell & mercie seate alwayes continueth. As soone as therefore thou hast risen againe & returned, thou hast grace restored. Howbeit he requireth this of thee, that thou also forgiue thy neighbour all things, which he hath cōmitted against thee, otherwise thou shalt not be in this kingdō of grace, neither shalt beeōe partaker of ꝑ which ꝑ Gospell preacheth, that thy sinnes may be forgiuen thee. This briefly is the summe & meaning of this text.

As the Lord forgiueth vs, so must we also forgiue our neighbour.

Moreouer, we must not here omit, to declare who they be that receiue the Gospell, and vnto whom it is acceptable. For surely that kingdom and gouernment, wherin God reigneth and ruleth by the Gospell, is most excellent and gentle, forasmuch as in it meere forgiuenes of sinnes is preached, howbeit it pearseth not into the heart of euery one, neither is it considered or esteemed of all. For thou mayst finde many light and vnconstant men, who abuse the Gospell, and leade their life dissolutely and loosely, doing what they list, who thinke that they should be rebuked of none, seeing that the Gospel teacheth nothing but forgiuenes of sinnes. The Gospell is not preached to these, who do so vilely esteeme of a precious treasure, and deale lightly with it. Wherefore neither doe they pertaine to this kingdom but to worldly gouernment, that they may be stopped & let from doing whatsoeuer they like and list. To whom then is it preached? to them which throughly

Abuse of the Gospell.

To whom the Gospell is preached.

feele such miserie, as this seruaunt did here. Wherefore consider what happeneth vnto him: The Lord taketh pitie of his miserie, forgiueth him more then he durst desire. But before this is done, the text sayth, the Lord first tooke account of his seruaunts, and when he began to reckon, one was brought vnto him, which owed him ten thousand talents: and because he had nothing to pay, his Lord commaunded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and the dette to be payed. Which truely were no pleasant wordes, but euen exceeding seueritie and most terrible iudgement, then is he brought into so great perplexitie and distresse, that he falleth downe on the ground, and asketh mercie, and promiseth more then he hath, or is able to pay, saying: Lord refraine thyne anger toward me, and I will pay thee all.

The preaching of the law.

Here is set forth vnto vs, who they be, vnto whom the Gospel is acceptable. For so commeth it to passe betwene God and vs. When God will take an account of vs, he sendeth forth the preaching of his law, whereby we learne to know what we ought to doe: as when God sayth to the conscience: Thou shalt worship no other God, but shalt acknowledge me alone for God, shalt loue me with all thine hart, and repose thy trust and hope in me onely. This is the booke of accounts, wherein is written what we owe, which he taking into his hands: readeth before vs, and sayth. Lo, this thou oughtest to haue done, thou oughtest to feare, loue, and worship me alone, thou oughtest to trust in me alone, and from me to promise to thy selfe all good thinges. Howbeit thou doost otherwise, thou art mine aduersarie, thou belecuest not in me, but reposest thy trust in other things: and in a summe, thou seest here, that thou doost not obserue so much as the least point of the lawe. When the conscience hath heard these thinges, and the law hath touched one well, he seeth then what he ought to doe, and what he hath not done, and findeth that he hath not kept so much as a letter of the law, and is compelled to confesse, that he hath not performed that obedience and dutie which God iustly requireth of him. What doth the Lord now? When ỹ conscience is thus touched, and feeleth it selfe condemned, and is distressed with exceeding great miserie, he sayth: Sell him, and whatsoeuer he hath, and let him pay the det. This is the iudgement, which forthwith followeth, when the law hath reuealed sinne, and sayd: This thou must doe, that thou oughtest to haue done, and thou hast done nothing

thing thereof: for to sinne is required punishment, that man may be compelled to pay. For God hath not so made his lawe, that he doth not punish them that transgresse it. It is not sweete & pleasant, but bringeth bitter and horrible paine with it, it deliuereth vs to Satan, it casteth vs downe to hell, and leueth vs wrapped in tentation, vntill we haue payed the vtmost farthing. This S. Paule hath notably well declared Rom. 4. where he sayth: The law worketh nothing but wrath. That is, when it reuealeth vnto vs, that we haue done vniustly, it setteth nothing before vs, but wrath & indignation. For when the conscience seeth that it hath cõmitted euill, it feeleth that it hath deserued eternall death, after which followeth punishmẽt, whereupon it is cõpelled to despaire.

This is that that the Lord commaundeth this seruaunt togither with all his substance to be solde, forasmuch as he is not able to pay. But what doth the seruaunt say? the foolish fellow thinketh yet, that he shall pay the dette, he falleth downe and prayeth that he wil haue patience with him. This is the wound and crosse of all consciences, that when sinne biteth them so, that they feele in how euill case they are before God, there is no rest in them, but they runne hither and thither, seeking about, that they may be deliuered from sinnes, & rashly take vpõ them as yet to do so great thinges, as wherewith they shall pay God, as we hitherto haue bene instructed, whereupon came so many pilgrimages, collegiate houses, Monasteries, Masses, & other trifles. We pyned our selues with fasting, we scourged our selues with wippes, we were made Monkes and Nunnes: therefore onely, for that we went about to leade such a life, and to do such and so many workes, as whereunto God might haue respect, and thereby be pacified, thinking so to appease and make quiet our consciences, so we committed the same thinges that this foolish fellow did. Such a hart as is touched with the lawe, & throughly feeleth it owne miserie and calamitie is humbled truely and in deede. Whereupon it falleth downe before the Lord and craueth mercy, Howbeit it is yet defiled with this vice, that it striueth to helpe it selfe, which thinge can not be taken away from nature, When as the conscience feeleth such miserie, it dareth presume to promise more then all the Angells in heauen are able to performe. Then is it an easie mater to perswade it to apply it selfe to doe, whatsoeuer can be required of it. For it findeth it selfe alwayes in such a case, that

Superstitious meanes inuented by men to be deliuered from sinne, and to purchase Gods fauour.

it hopeth that it is able by wozkes to satisfie foz sinnes. Consider those thinges which haue bene hitherto of longe time done in the wozld, then shalt thou find these thinges to be so: Foz thus was it preached, Giue somewhat to the building of a Church: Get to be admitted into an holy Monasterie, institute Masses, and thy sinnes shall be forgiuen thee. And when consciences were vzged in confession, they would not sticke to say: Whatsoeuer was enioined vs, we haue omitted nothing of it, yea we haue giuen moze then we were commaunded. Miserable men reioyced that by this meanes they might prouide foz themselues, and therefoze they pyned and afflicted them selues, that they might be vnburdened of their sinnes, yet did it preuaile them nothing. Foz the conscience remained in dout as befoze, that it knewe not how it stoode befoze God. But if it were secure and quiet, it fell into that which is wozse to thinke that God hath respect vnto wozkes, neither can reason doe any other but depend of wozkes. The Lozd therfoze is touched w affection of mercy toward that miserie, whrew ꝑ seruaunt so intangled & snared w sinnes, is holden, & taking pitie vpon him, doth forgine and dimisse him. Here is now set forth vnto vs, what is ꝑ special office & quality of ꝑ Gospel, & how God dealeth with vs. When thou art so drowned in sinnes, & wearyest thy self, that thou mayst deliuer thy selfe from them, the Gospell commeth to thee, & sayth: Do not so deare brother, it preuaileth nothing, although thou afflict and torment thy selfe euen til thou be mad, thy wozkes do not profit, but the mercy of God shal deliuer thee, who is touched with thy miserie: foz he seeth thee wrapped in calamitie, & wearying thy self, that thou mayst deliuer thy selfe out of the myre, & yet art not able: he, I say, hath regard vnto this, that thou art not able to pay, whereupon he forgiueth thee all, and that of his meere mercie. Foz he doth not forgiue thee the dette eyther foz thy wozkes oz merits, but foz that he taketh pittie vppon thy crie, complaint and mourning, and thy falling downe befoze his keenes: that is, God hath respect to an humbled hart, as the Prophet sayth Psal. 51: The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken & contrite hart, O God, shalt thou not despise. Such a hart he saith, as is broken and humbled, which is not able to helpe it selfe, but craueth the helpe of God, and reioyceth in it, such a hart is an acceptable sacrifice to God, and he that hath it, is in the right way to heauen. Nowe God hauing

The preaching of the Gospell.

shewed

shewed his mercy vnto him, & taken pitie on his miserie, ceasseth to followe his right, and abrogateth it, and sayth no more: Sell whatsoeuer thou hast & pay the dette: although he might go forward and say: Thou must pay, for this my law requireth, which I will not haue abrogated for thy sake: yet wil he not deale with him by the lawe, but chaungeth the lawe into grace and fauour, taketh pittie on him, and dimisseth him with his wife, children, and all his substance, and doth also forgiue him the dette.

This is that which God suffereth to be preached by the Gospell: vnto him that beleeueth, is remitted not onely the fault, but also the punishment, and that of meere mercy, not for any workes sake. For he that preacheth, that by workes the fault and the punishment may be put away, hath euen then denied ỳ Gospell, for asmuch as these two can not agree togither, that God hath mercie on thee, and yet that thou doest merit some thing. For if it be grace, it is not merit: but if it be merit, then shall it not be grace, but dette: for if thou pay thy dette, he sheweth thee no mercy: but if he sheweth thee mercy, thou doest not make payment. Wherefore we must needes acknowledge his mercy toward vs, we must receiue of him, and beleeue in him, which the Gospell here requireth. After therefore that this seruaunt is thus humbled with the knowledge of his sinne, the word is exceeding comfortable vnto him, wherein the Lord pronounceth him free, and forgiueth him both the fault and the punishment. Whereby is also declared, that it toucheth not sluggish hartes, that feele no sinne, neither those that are caried with rashnes, but onely such afflicted consciences, as are pressed with the heauie burden of their sinnes, which do greatly desire to be deliuered from them, of them God hath mercy, and forgiueth them all. Wherefore it behoued this seruaunt to receiue the word, for vnles he had receiued it, forgiuenes had profited nothing, nay there had bene no forgiuenes at all. It is not therefore enough, that God suffereth remission of sinnes, and a golde̅ pere ful of grace to be preached vnto vs, but it is necessary that we receiue and beleeue it in hart. If thou beleeue, thou art free from sinnes. This is the first part of a Christian life, which both this place and diuers other in the Gospels do teach vs, which consisteth properly in faith, which alone hath to do before God: whereby also is shewed that the Gospell can not be receiued but of a troubled and miserable conscience.

Mercie and merit can not agree togither.

Whom the preaching of the Gospell profiteth.

Hereupon now may be inferred that they are plaine delusions, whatsoeuer thinges are any otherwise taught concerning our workes, & free will, to wit, that they put away sinnes, and obtaine grace. For the diuine maiestie alone, beholding our miserie, hath pittie vpon vs, for the text sheweth manifestly, that God pardoneth & forgiueth them, that haue nothing, and concludeth that we haue nothing left, wherwith we may pay God. Howsoeuer therefore thou hast free will in temporal matters, yet thou heerest here that it is nothing before God. Wherefore if thou desire to be deliuered frō thy sinnes, thou must ceasse to trust in any of thy workes, and must plainly despaire concerniug them, and flie vnto Christ, pray vnto God for grace, finally receiue the Gospell by faith.

Now followeth the other part, wherein the felow seruaunt also is delt with. This seruaunt now hath enough, he saueth his body, goods, wife, children, &c. and hath his Lord fauourable vnto him. Wherefore he should surely be very foolish, if he should now depart, & do what he is able for the reconciliation of his Lord, for his Lord might worthely say that he is mocked of him. He hath neede therefore of no worke, but that he receiue such grace and fauour as is offered him, so may he be of a good cheere, giuing thankes to his Lord, & dealing so with others as his Lord hath delt with him. After the same sort it is with vs, for when we beleeue, we haue God fauourable & mercifull vnto vs, neither do we neede any thing more, but now it were time that we should forthwith die. Notwithstanding if we must as yet liue stil in the earth, our life ought to be ordred so, that we seeke not to obtaine the fauour of God by workes. For he that doth this, doth mocke and dishonour God, as it hath bene hitherto taught, that God is to be sollicited so long by good workes, prayers, fastinges, & such like, vntill we obtaine his grace and fauour. We haue obtained grace, not by workes, but by mercie, now if thou must liue, thou must haue what to do, & wherewith to occupie thy selfe, and it is meete that all this be referred to thy neighbour.

We must endeuour by our workes to profit our neighbour, & not seeke to obtaine Gods fauour by them.

The seruaunt went out, as Christ sayth, and found his fellowe seruaunt, whom he taketh by the throate and dealeth rigorously with him, and will be wholy payd of him, shewing him no mercy or fauour at all. I haue sayd elswhere, that Christians must burst forth by workes, & by their deedes before men witnes that they haue a sincere faith. God needeth no workes, but faith suffiseth him,

him, howbeit he thereforе requireth them to be done of thee, that by them thou mayst shew thy faith, both before thy selfe & also before the whole world, for he knoweth thy faith very wel, but thou thy selfe and men do not yet throughly see it. Thou therfore must direct such workes so, that they may profite thy neighbour. Now whereas this seruaunt should thus haue done, what doth he? euen the same that we doe, who seeme vnto our selues to beleeue, and partly haue faith, and are glad that we haue heard the Gospell, whereof we can dispute & talke many thinges, but no man goeth about to expresse it in his life. We haue brought the matter so farre, that the doctrine and trifles of Satan are some what abated and layde aside, that we do now see & know, what is iust, & what vniust: that we must haue to do with God by onely faith, and by workes with our neighbour. But we can not bring it to this passe, that loue may beginne, and doe that to an other which God hath done vnto vs, as we our selues complaine, that many of vs are become worse then they were before. As therefore this seruaunt refused to remit his neighbour the dette, & delt extreamly with him, so also doe we, saying: It is not meete that I should giue that that is mine to an other, neglecting mine owne right. If this man hath prouoked me to anger, it is his duetie to pacifie me, and to labour by intreatie to put away mine anger. Truly thus the world teacheth and doth, for it affirmeth it to be iust & right. Neither will any Prince or Magistrate enforce thee to giue that which is thine to an other, but will suffer thee to do what pleaseth thee with thine owne goods. The Magistrate in deed restraineth thee from doing what thou list with the good of an other, but he constraineth thee not to giue thine owne substaunce to an other, for that is against ỹ Law of nations, which euen reason pronouncing it, giueth to euery one that which is his owne: wherefore he doth not vnequally or vniustly which vseth his owne things at his will, and taketh not away wrongfully the goods of an other.

Busie talkers & slow walkers.

But what doeth the Gospell saye? If God also had holde his owne right, and sayd: I do well in that I punish offenders, & take that which is mine owne, who shall let me? what I pray you should become of vs all? We should be thrust downe to Satan. Wherefore, whereas he hath left his right toward thee, he will haue thee do the same toward other: and therefore thou abrogating thine owne right, thinke thus with thy selfe: If God hath

We must be mercifull to our brethren as God is mercifull to vs.

forgiuen me tenne thousand talents, why should not I forgiue my neighbour an hundred pence? God might haue exacted his owne right, neuertheleſſe he doth not ſo, but becommeth a ſauourable Lord vnto thee, taketh pittie vpon thee, and forgiueth thee: why therefore ſhouldeſt not thou do likwiſe to thy neighbour? Wherefore if thou wilt haue to do in his kingdome, thou muſt do as he doeth: but if thou haddeſt rather remaine in the kingdome of the world, thou ſhalt neuer enter into his kingdome. Hereunto pertaineth that ſentence, which Chriſt in the laſt day ſhall pronounce vpon the vnbeleeuers: I was an hungred, and ye gaue me no meate: I thirſted, and ye gaue me no drinke. &c. But if thou contend hereagainſt: Notwithſtanding ye ſay, that God will not haue reſpect vnto workes, neither will ſaue any becauſe of them. I ſay he will haue them done frankly and freely, not that we may merit any thing thereby, but that we may do them to the profite of our neighbours, and witnes our ſincere faith by them. For what haſt thou that thou mayſt giue him, & whereby thou mayſt deſerue that he ſhould pardon whatſoeuer thou haſt committed againſt him? Or what doth he get thereby? nothing truely, but that thou giueſt vnto him praiſe and thanks. And this is the other part of a Chriſtian life, the name whereof is loue.

Matth.25.

They therefore that ſhew not their faith by the works of loue are ſuch ſeruauntes, as will haue them ſelues forgiuen, when as they notwithſtanding do not forgiue their neighbour, neither peelde of their owne right, with whom it ſhall likewiſe fall out as it did with this ſeruaunt. For when the other ſeruaunts (that is, the miniſters and preachers of the Goſpell) ſhall ſee it, that God hath forgiuen them all, and yet they will not forgiue any, they are troubled, that they are compelled to ſee ſuch thinges, and it grieueth them very ſore, that men doe ſo vndiſcreetely apply themſelues to the Goſpell, and not rightly receiue it. What doe they then? They can doe no other, but come to their Lord, and complayne vnto him of ſuch thinges, and ſay: Lord, thus it is: thou forgiueſt them both the fault and the puniſhment, yea pardoneſt them all thinges, and yet we can not bring them ſo farre, as to deale ſo with others as thou haſt dealt with them. This is the complaint: the Lord therefore will cauſe them to come before him in the laſt iudgement, and will lay thoſe thinges againſt them ſaying: when thou waſt afflicted with hunger, thirſt, miſe-

They that will ſhew no mercy ſhall themſelues finde none.

rie,

rie, &c: I did helpe thee: when thou didst ly drowned in sinnes, I hauing mercy vpon thee, did forgiue thee. Hast thou done the same to thy neighbour? Then he shall pronounce this sentence on him: Thou wicked one, I was touched with mercy towarde thee, yea I yeelded of mine owne right, but thou wouldest not take pittie on others, nor forgiue them their offence, wherefore thou shalt now pay the dette. Here is no grace and mercie, but most grieuous wrath and eternall condemnation, then no prayers do helpe, wherefore he is compelled to holde his peace, and is throwne headlong into paine, vntill he pay the vttermost farthing. This is that which Sainct Peter hath spoken of them, which after they haue heard the Gospell, notwithstanding goe backe, that it had bene better for them, if they had neuer acknowledged the way of righteousnes, then after they haue acknowledged it, to turne from the holy commaundement giuen vnto them. Why had it bene better? Because while they goe backe, it becõmeth worse with them then it was before they heard the Gospell, as Christ sayth of the vncleane spirite Matth. 12. which taketh vnto himselfe seuen other spirites worse then himselfe, with which he commeth, and dwelleth in that man, out of whom he before had gone, and so the end of that man is worse then the beginning. After the same maner commeth it to passe with vs, and shall hereafter also be vsuall: so also hath it fallen out with Rome. In the time of the Martyrs she was in her best flower, but afterward she fell, and abhomination was there erected, that Antichrist might reigne there, yea she became such a one, that worse she can not be. The grace of God, which is reuealed and preached by the Gospel, was hidde, that men might not attaine vnto it: wherefore it could not be but a great and grieuous scourge and plague should follow. 2. Pet. 2. 21.

So we also shall trie that great vengeance will come vpon vs, for that we do not beleeue nor obey the Gospell, which we haue, and know. For as often as God would send an horrible scourge and plague, he hath first set vp a great light: As when he would send the Iewes out of their owne countrey into captiuitie in Babylon, he first raised vp the godly King Iosia, who should againe restore the law, that the people might amend their life, but when they did againe reuolt, God punished them according to their desart. So when he mynded to destroy the Egyptians, he made a

God vseth lenity before he executeth seueritie, & first warneth before he harmeth.

light to be set vp, and preached vnto them by Moses and Aaron: Moreouer when he would drowne all the world by the floud, he sent the Patriarch Noe, but when men did not amende, but became worse and worse, such a sore & grieuous plague did follow. Likewise the fiue Cities Sodome & Gomorra togither with the rest were destroyed, for that they would not heare Lot, who feared God. Wherefore as sharpe vengeance shall light vpon them also, which heare the Gospell, but do not receiue it: euen as the seruaunt here in the Gospell, is deliuered to the tormentours till he should pay all the dette: which is as much in effect as, that he is compelled to suffer punishment for his fault, and is neuer saued. For vnto sinne is required death, and when he dieth, he dieth alwayes, neither is there any helpe or deliueraunce remaining. Wherefore let vs receiue these things for our owne admonition: as for them that will not heare, being hardened and indurate, let them beware of the euill that hangeth ouer them.

This is a very comfortable text, and sweete to troubled consciences, inasmuch as it containeth in it meere forgiuenes of sinnes: Againe it setteth forth terrible iudgement to the vnmercifull & hard harted, especially seeing that this seruaunt is not an Heathen, but had heard the Gospell, in that he had faith: inasmuch as the Lord tooke pittie on him, and forgaue him his offences, without doute he was a Christian. Wherefore this is not the punishment of Gentiles, nor of the common sort that heare not the Gospell, but of them that with their eares heare the Gospell, and with their tongue talke of it, but will not expresse it in their life. We haue therefore the summe of this text. Whereas the Schoolemen dispute here, whether sinne commeth againe, which was before remitted, I let it passe, for they are ignorant what remission of sinnes is: they thinke it is a thing that cleaueth to the hart, and lyeth quietly, when as notwithstanding it is plainely the kingdome of Christ, which endureth for euer without ceassing. For as the Sunne neuertheles shineth, although I shut myne eyes: so this mercy seat or forgiuenes of synne standeth alwayes, albeit I fall. And as I againe behold the Sunne when I open myne eyes: so I againe haue forgiuenes of sinnes, if I rise againe, and returne vnto Christ. Wherefore let no man bring forgiuenes into such a straite, as these mad men dreame of.

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, TEACHING THAT WE MVST CLEAVE WHOLY TO CHRIST, AND LOOKE TO OBTAINE ALL GOOD THINGES through him.

Matth. 9.

Verse 18. WHile Ieſus ſpake vnto the people, behold there came a certaine ruler, and worſhipped him, ſaying: My daughter is now deceaſed, but come and lay thy hand on her and ſhe ſhall liue.

19. And Ieſus aroſe and folowed him with his diſciples.

20. And behold, a woman which was diſeaſed with an iſſue of blood twelue yeares, came behinde him, and touched the hemme of his garment.

21. For ſhe ſayd in her ſelfe, if I may touch but his garment onely, I ſhalbe whole.

22. Then Ieſus turned him about, and ſeeing her, did ſay: Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole in that ſame moment.

23. Now when Ieſus came into the rulers houſe, & ſaw the minſtrels and the multitude making

24. noyſe, He ſayd vnto them, Get you hence: for the mayde is not dead, but ſleepeth. And they laughed him to ſcorne,

25. And whē the multitude were put forth, he went in, & toke her by the hand, & the mayde aroſe.

26. And this bruit went throughout all that land.

DEarely beloued, ye knowe that the Gospell is nothing els, but a treatise of the onely person, whose name is Christ. And albeit there be extant many bookes & sundrie treatises cõcerning diuers men, as well of the Gentiles as Christians, yea and of the mother of God, S. Peter, the Angelles, and of many other Sainctes beside: yet be they not Gospelles, but that onely is the syncere Gospell, which setteth forth Christ vnto vs, & what good we must hope for from him. Sometime in the Gospell there is mention made of Iohn the Baptist, Marie, & the Apostles, howbeit this is not properly the Gospell, but therefore it is written of them, that it might be more perfectly declared, from whence Christ should come, & what is his office. So Luke describeth the history of Iohn the Baptist euen from the beginning, what was done both in his conception and in his nativitie, he writeth also of the virgine Marie. All which thinges were committed to writing not because of their person, but because of Christes person onely. In the Epistles of S. Paul there is nothing committed to memorie of the Saincts, but all thinges sound plainely of Christ. For God hath so ordained, that all men must depende on that one man Christ, must hope in him, must repose their trust in him, if they desire to be saued, for he alone is set forth of God to be a reconsiliation for vs, as Paule sayth Rom. 3. Hitherto one hath cleaued to this Sainct, an other to that, one chose to himselfe S. Marie, an other S. Barbarie, and diuers sectes and sortes of religion did flourish. But Christ was in no price, for his name onely remained. We had many intercessours, all which being neglected we ought to haue cleaued onely to Christ. Hereupon S. Paule sayth, that the Gospell was promised of God by the Prophetes concerning his sonne. He reduceth and bringeth it into such a streight, that in the Gospel nothing is of any importaunce which concerneth not Iesus Christ. He that knoweth this, let him giue thankes to God, that he knoweth where he may seeke for consolation and helpe, and in whom he may repose his trust.

All that will be saued must depend on Christ, & put their hope and trust in him.

Christ in this dayes Gospell is set forth vnto vs, that he is conuersaunt in the myddest of the people, and draweth all the world vnto himselfe with his gentlenes and sweete doctrine, that they may cleaue vnto him in their hart, that they may commit themselues to his goodnes, and hope that they shall obtaine

of

of him both spirituall and corporall good thinges. Neither doth he receiue any thing of them, vpon whom he bestoweth benefites, nay he obtaineth nothing of them but ignominie and scorning, as is declared in this text. A benefite proceedeth from him, for which he receiueth a mocke and reproch. Now the Gospell is preached and offered to the whole worlde, that we may learne to knowe this man well, and how we must be made Christians, and not how we must be made good. Other treatises beside the Gospell teach of those thinges, whereby men may be made good, as the writinges of the Philosopers and the rulers of the ciuill lawe. The liues also of the Sainctes haue especiall respecte vnto this, that men may imitate them. It belongeth not to the Gospell to make good men, but to make Christian men. For it is farre more excellent to be a Christian, then an honest & good man. A Christian can say nothing of his owne goodnes or righteousnes, for he findeth in him selfe nothing either good or righteous, but he must flye to the righteousnes which is in an other, & which commeth vnto him from an other. Hereupon Christ is sette forth vnto vs, as a continuall fountaine, which alwayes ouerfloweth with meere goodnes and grace, for which he receiueth nothing of vs, but that the godly doe acknowledge so great goodnes and grace, doe giue him thankes for the same, do prayse and loue him, others in the meane season mocking him, such a rewarde he receiueth of them.

Why the Gospell is preached.

Wherefore one is not therefore called a Christian, for that he worketh much, for there is an other thing, which is cause hereof, namely for that he receiueth and draweth from Christ. If one receiueth nothing any more of Christ, neither is he any more a Christian, so that the name of a Christian commeth onely by receiuing, and not by giuing or doing. If thou thinke that because of thy workes and deedes thou art a Christian, thou hast euen then lost the name of Christ. Good workes in deede are to be done, counsell thereunto is to be giuen and receiued, but no man is therefore called a Christian, neither is any therefore a Christian. Wherefore if any will more inwardly wepe this name, in this respect onely a Christian is to be acknowledged, inasmuch as he receiueth of Christ alone. Euen as one is called white of the whitenes that is in him, blacke of the blackenes, great of his stature: so a Christian is called of Christ, whom

A Christian whereof so called.

he hath in himselfe, & of whom he receaueth that which is good. Now if one be named a Christian of Christ, he taketh not that name of his owne workes, whereupon it plainely also followeth, that no man is made a Christian by workes. Which if it be true, as it is true and certaine, it shall follow that Orders and Sectes doe nothing pertaine to the name of Christ, neither doe make a Christian. Wherefore they which preach or teach in the Church, and ordaine precepts, workes, and decrees, are deceiuers, who albeit they pretend a Christian name, yet profite they nothing, for vnder the coulour of that name they endeuour to burden and oppres vs with commaundementes and workes. Of workes, giuing thy selfe to fasting and prayers, thou mayest be called abstinent and temperate, but by no meanes a Christian. For although thou diddest lay all thy workes together, yea and ioynedst the workes of all other to thine, yet neither so hast thou Christ, neither art thou therefore called a Christian. Christ is a certaine other more excellent thing, then either the lawe or mans tradition. He is the sonne of God, who is ready to giue onely, not to receiue: when as I am such a one that I doe receiue of him, I haue him also, whom if I haue, I am by good right called a Christian.

Moreouer, the Gospell preacheth Christ also to be ỹ greatest and most highly exalted person in the world, not that he doth terrifie men, but that he poureth forth all earthly and heauenly good thinges, so that all men must trust in him, must haue their hope reposed in him, and alwayes receiue onely of him. If any sinne terrifie me in my conscience, and the preachers of the lawe endeuour to helpe me with their workes, they shall preuaile nothing with me. For then Christ alone can helpe and none beside him, yea others make the case worse, whether it be Peter, or Paule, or the blessed virgine Marie her selfe the mother of God. For Christ onely performeth all things, who in his worde, declareth that if I beleeue, my sinne is forgiuen me freely, without all both worke and merite, by pure grace through faith in Christ. Which word when I shall receiue, I receiue also comfort, that my sinnes be forgiuen me as well before God as before men, and I therefore giue thankes to God through Christ, which giueth the holy Ghost and his grace vnto me, that sinne may not hurt me, neither here, nor in the last iudgement. If I feare death, and would not

die

die willingly, in this Christ I shall finde comfort and remedie, that I shall not greatly passe for death. If because of the wrath of God I be afraide, he is my Mediatour. And to be briefe, he that hath not this Christ, the wrath of God alwaies remaineth ouer him, and in that state he standeth.

A glad conscience how it is obtained.

Wherefore he that desireth to haue a glad conscience, which is not afraid of sinne, death, hell, and the wrath of God, must take heede that he repose his trust in this Mediatour Christ. For he is a fountaine abounding with grace, which giueth both temporall and eternall life. Endeuour thou to thinke and feele him euen in thy hart to be such a one, then shalt thou obtaine all thinges, for he aboundeth and ouerfloweth, neither can he but giue, flow, and abound, if that thou canst beleeue. Then also shalt thou be a right Christian, howbeit by receiuing onely of Christ, and not by giuing. It is a very rich and precious word, which Paule prayseth so greatly, neither can he euer prayse it sufficiently, whereby God so gently offereth his sonne, that he may poure forth his grace vpon all, which do not refuse to receiue it. Hereupon it moreouer foloweth: If so be that a Christian doth good workes, whereby he sheweth loue to his neighbour, he is not therefore made a Christian or righteous, but he must needes be a Christian and righteous before. He doeth good workes in deede, but they doe not make him a Christian. The tree bringeth forth and giueth fruite, and not the fruite the tree. So none is made a Christian by workes, but by Christ.

Christians what they are.

Hereof now ye may vnderstande, what kinde of people Christians be, namely, that they be a companie which cleaue vnto Christ, and are of one spirite & gifte with him. Hereupon it is that all Christians are alike, neither hath one more of Christ then an other. S. Peter is not better then the Theefe on the crosse: Marie the mother of God doth not excell Marie Magdalen the sinnefull woman. There is in deede a difference in outward thinges and doinges, so the worke of the holy virgine Marie was greater, then the worke of Marie Magdalen: Peter had a greater worke then the Theefe, if thou consider the works, but we are not therefore Christians. The holy virgine Marie is not a Christian because of her great worke, for that she did beare Christ so vnspeakeable a treasure in her wombe, as Christ himselfe sayd to the woman, which cried vnto him from among the

people, Luke. 11. Bleſſed is the wombe that bare thee, and the pappes which thou haſt ſucked: yea rather, ſayth he, bleſſed are they that heare the worde of God and kepe it. In which place thou ſeeſt, that he preferreth the faithfull euen aboue his mother. For Chriſtians do therefore beare their name, becauſe they beleeue in Chriſt. A virgine and a mother are two notable names, howbeit they are nothing, being compared to the true name of the faithfull. Wherefore we are all alike in Chriſt through faith, albeit S. Peter haue a ſtronger faith then I, yet mine is as well faith in Chriſt as his. For the ſame Chriſt is offered of God the Father vnto all companies and people, whom he that hath obtained, hath him whole, whether he be ſtrong or weake, for that ſkilleth not. The woman mentioned in our text, which was troubled ſo many yeares with her diſeaſe, doth receiue and apprehend Chriſt as well as the virgine Marie his mother. Wherefore there is one Chriſtian ſpirite, one excelleth with an other in the noblenes of byrth, S. Peter is enforced to call me his brother, and I againe dare be bolde to call him my brother. Yea Chriſt himſelfe is touched with care of vs, and counteth vs for his brethren, as he ſaid after his reſurrection to Marie Magdalen, Joh. 20. I aſcende vnto my Father and to your Father, and to my God and your God. And S. Paule calleth Chriſt the firſt borne among many brethren. Whereof alſo he writeth excellently in the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, where entreating of falſe brethren, he ſpeaketh thus: Take heede leaſt by any meanes this power of yours be an occaſion of fallyng to them that are weake. For if any man ſee thee which haſt knowledge, ſitte at table in the idols temple, ſhall not the conſcience of him which is weake, be boldned to eate thoſe thinges which are ſacrificed to idols? and ſo through thy knowledge ſhall the weake brother periſh, for whom Chriſt died. Now when ye ſinne ſo againſt your brethren, & wounde their weake conſcience, ye ſinne againſt Chriſt. Here thou ſeeſt, if a Chriſtian be offended, or euell be done vnto him, the ſame is done vnto Chriſt. This therefore is the ſumme of the whole Goſpell, that we may learne ſo to know Chriſt, that the name onely doe not remayne, but that we may know that all that we haue, we haue it from him. If we be Chriſtians, we haue all thinges, then God is our father, and we are Lordes of all both heauenly and earthly thinges,

1. Cor. 8. 9.

The ſumme of the Goſpell.

thinges, which is gotten of vs by no worke be it neuer so great.

Thou seest now how farre they be from the name of Christ, which be vnder the kingdome of the Pope. They that will preach the Gospell must preach nothing els, beside the onely person, which is Christ, not Marie, so farre must they be from preaching the Pope or any worke albeit precious, they must preach & offer Christ onely vnto vs, & none beside him. When now he is preached vnto thee as a iudge (as he shall come in the last day) and how that good workes are to be done of thee, for which thou mayst be rewarded of him, & thou shalt so receiue it, surely without all dout he shalbe vnto thee a iudge & not a sauiour. And if he be so set forth vnto thee, as he was wont to be painted, that his mother sheweth him her pappes, that is properly to preach Satan and not Christ, who giueth onely, and receiueth not. This is certaine, when thou shalt haue receiued of him, then good workes do flow forth of their owne accord, being not compelled, as is set forth in this dayes Gospell: wherein moreouer is declared that Christ preacheth the Gospel to ỳ people: now it is not a common worke to preach. For it is a great benefite vnto vs, that he is become our maister and instructer, that he teacheth vs by what meanes we may come to the knowledge of him, this is a part of his great goodnes and grace. For as long as he was here in the earth, he ceassed not to teach, that we might altogither receiue him for the Messias and Sauiour: and by his workes also did helpe and relieue euery one, when the case so required.

Thou fyndest no man in the Gospell, to whom helpe was denied, or which at any time asked any thing of the Lord, which was not giuen him. For how many soeuer went vnto him, that were blinde, deafe, lame, sicke of the palsey, had the dropsie, he receiued all, and helped them all according to their desire, and healed them of all kindes of diseases, as Luke sayth: All the whole multitude sought to touch him, for there went vertue out of him, and healed them all. So doeth he also to this woman. The woman heareth him preaching, and perceiueth him to be a bountifull and gracious man, which sheweth himselfe gentle to the whole worlde, whereupon she hath an affection both to loue him, and to cleaue vnto him. For she maketh accompt, forasmuch as he putteth away none from him, that he would not denie her his goodnes, wherefore leauing all the Apostles, she

The exceeding gentlenes & bountifulnes of Christ.

Luke.6.19

casteth both her harte and confidence vpon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with her selfe: If I may touch but the hemme of his garment, I shalbe whole. She thought no other thing in her hart, but, certainely he will helpe me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with mine hand, yet hath she not so good a corage, that she dare come before his face, she iudged her selfe more vnworthie, then that she might either talke with him, or looke vpon him, for she knew that she had deserued nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing vpon the Lord, hereupon it is that she so behaueth her selfe, she commeth behinde his backe, she falleth downe at his feete, and toucheth onely the hemme of his garment. In a summe, here is nothing but meere bashfulnes and want of merit: here is no preparation, here is no worke, and yet the miserable woman promiseth her selfe much goodnes from the Lord, namely that he would heale her. She had bene diseased with an issue of blood twelue whole yeares, what could she merit thereby? how could she therefore be worthy of any thing? Neuertheless being vnworthie, and hauing merited nothing, she notwithstanding looketh for helpe of Christ, feeling her selfe to haue great neede thereof. And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodnes of Christ, when I feele my selfe to stand in neede thereof, and then doth it very well fall out, when these two come together, the rich and the poore, Christ and the sinner. But it is no small matter for men to be perswaded, that they are poore, and stand in neede of grace. For that commeth to passe very hardly, Satan also doth not suffer it, but alwayes draweth men backe to workes, that they may not come so farre, as to thinke that they haue neede either of ỹ grace or mercy of Christ.

The woman diseased with an issue of blood.

The text affirmeth that the woman was diseased with an issue of blood, twelue whole yeares, and had spent all her substaunce vpon Phisitians, & that the more medicines she tooke, the worse alwayes she was. Luke and Marke do not a litle exaggarate and amplifie it, whereby they both signifie, that the more workes be preached, so much the worse is it with vs, and that there commeth nothing vnto vs thereby, but a continuall multiplying of our euell. Our conscience can not be quieted with workes, for albeit some sinne be driuen out of the conscience, forthwith there is an other, yea the remedy and worke oftentimes do make sinne in vs, where there is no sinne, vntill such time as we come to Christ,

Chriſt, euē as it was with this womā, which had bin ſicke ſo long, neither had ſhe bin euer helped, if ſhe had not come to Chriſt, of whom ſhe obtaineth health without any workes, giuing him nothing, but receiueth onely of him, and ſuffereth to be giuen vnto her. Now here is alſo declared, how the worde of God is dayly to be handled, and without ceaſſing to be vrged, for there are as yet alwayes found ſuch men, as haue very troubled and afflicted conſciences. For this woman is a type or figure of al men, which are diſeaſed with an iſſue, that is, which feele there ſinne, the iſſue whereof doeth alwayes runne, neither can it be ſtayed, for fleſh and blood doeth no otherwiſe, then it is caried with it owne luſt and deſire. Now if that feeling of ſinne be great, thoſe wretches come forth and endeuour to helpe themſelues, then one taketh this worke in hand, an other that, and yet preuaile they nothing. From hence ſo many orders, ſo many monaſteries haue ſprong, hereupon ſo many and ſo great workes haue bene inuented, that they are almoſt without number. What was the cauſe of all theſe? ſurely euen the ſinnefull conſcience. For we haue thought to ſaue our ſoules by theſe, and to be deliuered wholy from all ſinnes. But Chriſt was not there preſent, for we would giue and not receiue. Wherefore our caſe became alwayes worſe, as it fell out alſo with this woman, who if ſhe had tried the helpe of all Phiſitians, neither yet ſo could ſhe finde, whereby ſhe might be holpen. So we alſo beleeued all Phiſitians, for whatſoeuer euery one brought, that we byandby receiued. And was it any meruell? for we deſired to be healed & to haue a glad conſcience. The Phiſitians are the preachers of the Lawe: Now if any deſired to be deliuered from ſinnes, what did they vnto him? they gaue him, whereby he became onely weaker and feebler, which ſurely we haue ſeene and felt to our great euell, namely, how they would haue men to be iuſtified by workes, & by them to be deliuered from ſinnes. But it profited nothing, for we were alwayes made more weake againſt ſinne and death, ſo that there is neuer found in the earth a more deſperate ſort of people, then Sacrificing Prieſtes, Monkes and Veſtall virgines, and they whatſoeuer they be that truſt in workes: if there did but a litle byle ariſe vpon them, byandby they muſt runne to the Poticarie, then is ſuch trying of medecine, ſuch running and haſt, as though they had nowe breathed their laſt. Neither is any ſo afrayde

Continuall preaching of the worde of God very neceſſarie.

of the last iudgement as this people. Which then they very well shew, when they so deale with workes, that they rest onely vpon them, neither do persever constant in any worke, and the more workes they doe, so much worse is their case, so much more are they cast downe in minde and become more desperate, so that it falleth out with them as with this woman.

It is a very goodly similitude, which may most fitly be applied to vs: for we do not onely bestow temporall thinges, but our body also by fasting, chastising, and bearing other hard and intollerable burdens, so that some haue thereby become mad, and destitute of all strength, yea & at the last lost their life. And I my selfe haue bene such a one, and haue without dout more resorted to medicines then many other. I could not attaine so farre, as to leaue the Popes lawe. It seemed a hard and a sore matter vnto me to eate flesh on the friday, O good God, how hard a thing was it to me, before I durst attempt to doe that? Wherefore if any will be deliuered from such thinges, and contemne the traditions of the Pope, truely he must haue a stronge foundation of faith, which if he shall not haue, let him looke about him againe and againe before he attempt it. For if faith be wanting, it will fall out with vs as with this woman, who had spent all her substance vpon Philistians, amending nothing, but rather waxing worse and worse: In like maner all our workes, labours & endeuours shall be lost, all our obedience, with all orders or religions, and whatsoeuer we haue bestowed therein shall be in vaine. Howbeit if we haue faith, we shall at the last see the decrees of the Pope and popish Bishops to be nothing, because of which before we trembled and were troubled, all which did helpe vs so much, as the Philistians did that good woman, which had bestowed all her substance and riches, yea and her body also, that she might be healed. How many kindes of medicines and syrups thinkest thou did that woman vse? how weake, feeble, & sicke was she oftentimes made with them? yea if she might haue bene healed, it may seeme she would haue taken any medicine, hawbeit it profited her nothing, she was afflicted with her disease ỳ space of twelue yeares. How therefore is this miserable woman at the last helped? When she did light vpon a man whose name is Christ, and put her hope and trust in him, she was healed. But who led her to that man? without dout not the Philistians. For if our Preachers should preach

A hard thing to forsake papistrie being once entangled therewith.

Christ,

Chriſt, the marchandize of the Pope togither with his decrees would be nothing ſet by, but rather ſhe heard it of ſome that was alſo reſtored to health, who told her without douting, that there was a certaine man, whom his parents had named Ieſus, which is a gentle and good man, which helpeth euery one, and ſendeth away none from him whom he helpeth not, & therfore is without dout ſent of God, that he may helpe al. Which the womã hauing heard, ſhe leaueth the Phiſitians, and maketh haſt vnto Chriſt.

So alſo at this day it falleth out: Not Chriſt, but workes only are preached, do this or that, neuertheles it is ſpred amõg the people what Chriſt is, what we muſt looke for of him, & that he alone muſt do al things without our workes or merits. This report being heard, we follow him, and lay vp theſe wordes in the depth of our hart, we leaue the phiſitiãs, nothing regarding the preachers of the law and workes, or their cõmaundements & traditions, but runne with all deſire of hart to this man, which is Chriſt, ſaying to the Pope: if I muſt receiue only of Chriſt, how vnwiſely haue I delt, that I haue turned ſo much vnto thee? farewel therfore O Pope, farewel ye beloued Biſhops, I neede no more your medicine, workes & merits, precepts & lawes, ye haue grieued me long enough with them, I haue gotten one, which beſtoweth vpon me freely, whatſoeuer I payd ful deare for vnto you before: he giueth that vnto me without workes & merits, for which I was faine before to beſtow my body, ſtrength & health, & yet could not obtaine it. Fare ye wel, I mynd to cõe no more to you hereafter. Chriſtiãs therfore are made, not by the decrees of the Pope, not by workes, not by ỳ ordinances of men, but by the grace & goodnes of Chriſt.

The true preaching of Chriſt calleth from the traditiõs of men to faith & truſt in him alone

Wherfore if thou haſt a diſquieted & a troubled mynde & conſcience, ſo that thou art afraide of ſinne, dreadeſt death, or haſt ſome defect otherwiſe, get thee to that mã, & cõfeſſe what thou wanteſt, cal vpon him, then ſurely he wil helpe thee: poure out thy hart before him as the 62. Pſal. ſaith, & ſay thus vnto him behold here is an empty veſſel, which greatly needeth wherwith it may be filled, I beſeech thee, O my Lord, vouchſafe to fil it, I am weake in faith, I pray thee to ſtrẽgthẽ me, I am cold in charity, do thou make me hot, & feruent, ỳ my loue may extend vnto my neighbour, I haue no firme faith, neither cã I ſomtime truſt in God, O Lord helpe me, & encreaſe my faith & confidence: in thee haue I repoſed the treaſure of al good thinges, I am poore, thou art rich, & therefore

We muſt flie vnto Chriſt in our diſtreſſe.

dioſt thou come, that thou mightest haue mercie on the poore: I am a ſinner, thou art righteous, yea I haue aboundance of ſinnes but in thee is al fulnes and grace. Whē thou ſhalt once haue learned this, the Popes ordinaunces ſhall not snare thee, by which thou getteſt nothing, but conſumeſt all that thou haſt, like as this woman did. Then wilt thou ſay? I will chose to my ſelfe him, of whom I may receiue, vnto whom I neede not giue any thing.

The other Euangelists write concerning this woman, that after she was healed, Christ perceiued vertue to haue gone out of him, and turned him about in the preaſe, and asked who had touched him, and that his Diſciples made aunſwere, that the multitude did throng & thruſt him, but that the Lord would not be content with that aunſwere, but ſayd: ſome one hath touched me: for I perceiue ẏ vertue is gone out of me, I know that ſome one hath receiued ſome thing from me. All which the Lorde therefore did, that the faith of the woman might be thankefull vnto him, which he would therefore haue made manifeſt before all the people, for that nothing is more acceptable vnto him, then that we beleeue and truſt in him, & alſo that the Lorde might by this miracle confirme the faith of the Ruler. Wherefore Marke ſayth, that when the woman vnderſtood that the Lorde knew of her, ſhe feared and trembled, and came and fell downe before him, and tolde him the whole truth, how it fell out with her: whereupon the Lord doth deliuer her and ſayth: Goe in peace, & be whole of thy diſeaſe. Were not theſe louing wordes? what great ioy did the woman take here, when as Chriſt had delt ſo bountifully with her? This ioy and peace al they obtaine, which repoſe their whole hope and truſt in Chriſt Jeſus. Where this ioy ſhal be, forth with workes muſt needes follow, which may ſhewe forth this ioy: as alſo the faith of this woman muſt needes come to light. For as ſoone as ſhe had receiued of the Lorde, ſhe confeſſed before all the people, neither was ſhe aſhamed to declare, that ſhe had receiued ſomething of him, for which notwithſtanding ſhe had giuen nothing. Now, God requireth of vs theſe workes & this giuing of thanks, to wit, that we confeſs & declare before all men ſuch good thinges, grace and benefites, that others alſo may be brought vnto him, & ſuffer a benefit to be beſtowed vpon them, as it was here done. Wherefore Chriſtian life enforceth me to doe good vnto others alſo, euen as God through Chriſt hath done good vnto me, but there-

The frute of true hope in Christ.

thereby am I not made a Christian, as the woman here is not healed by her confession, for she was healed before any worke & confession, but after she had recouered her health, she confesseth Christ, and prayseth him, euen to the commodity and conuerting of others. We also inasmuch as we are Christians, doe so liue, that one helpeth and pleasureth an other in what thing soeuer he is at any time able. And as this woman was healed before all workes, so we must be made Christians before we do any worke.

As the Gospell is set before our eyes in this women: so is it also set forth in the Daughter of this Ruler. This chiefe ruler of the Sinagogue, whom Marke calleth Iairus, had a strong faith and confidence, that Christ would raise vp his Daughter. For vnles he had bene of that mynde concerning Christ, he had not come vnto him, neither had desired such a thing of him which exceeded the power & strength of nature. Wherefore by this prayer he shewed his faith, which faith being perceiued, the Lorde could not but graunt his desire, wherfore rising forthwith, he wēt with him, and in this going this historie of the woman came to passe, which had bene diseased of an issue of blood twelue yeares, as we haue now hearde. When therfore the Lord was entred into the Rulers house, he saw the minstrells and the multitude making noyse, which were there according to the law of Moses, and did sound the trumpet and pipes as in our cuntrie they ring the bells to gather the people togither. But he commaūded the multitude to go forth, saying: The childe is not dead but sleepeth. And they laught him to scorne and mocked him. Which giueth vs to vnderstand, that when it is preached, that Christ is he which saueth, that our workes preuaile nothing, then the worlde can not conceine it selfe, but that it scorneth & mocketh, for it can not be persuaded, that Christ doth helpe & succour, euen as this people without al doute sayd after this sort: Behold what an excellent Maister and a goodly Phisitian he is, what could he haue holpē, which knoweth not yet, what it is to sleepe, and what to be dead? This title must needes remayne to the Gospell in the worlde, that the preaching therof is coūted foolish & contemptible. For Satā can not abide, that honour should be giuen to this Gospel before the worlde, for it bringeth but small commoditie to his kingdom, which forasmuch as he perceiueth ful wel, he practiseth al crafts and wiles, that he may either altogither hinder it, or at the least

The preaching of the Gospell is contemned and counted foolishnes of the world.

make it to preuaile litle with thē that be his, whose harts he hath wholy blynded & possessed, that the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ should not shine vnto them, as S. Paul saith 2. Cor. 4

Neither yet can it be, that this preaching of Christ should not be frutefull, forasmuch as it is not vttered in vaine: for albeit it be receiued but of a few, that doth not greatly skill. When therfore Satan perceiueth any thing to be taken from him, and that that preaching is ordained plainly against his kingdom, he doth without delay pursue it, contemne it, and assaile it on euery side, that euen now he is fierce & rageth in the whole worlde. For the Gospell of Christ ouerthroweth whatsoeuer the world and Satan delight in, and whatsoeuer to the worlde seemeth most holy & goodly. For the world imagineth to it selfe such a God, as hath regard to our good workes, and will be pleased with the erecting of masses and vigiles for them that are departed, with Rosaries as they call them, habit, shauing, and whatsoeuer other trifles are vsed in the Papacie. Now if there come any which bringeth the Gospell, and inueyeth against these vaine toies of the Pope, and sayth that they are nothing worth, but are meere delusions, inasmuch as they are repugnant to Christ and the Scripture, he is counted a most wicked felow, and therefore must be punished, he is reproued as an heretike and a seducer of the people: so that they burst forth into great words and say: wilt thou gouerne all the whole world? doost thou thinke thy selfe the wisest man that is? and were our forefathers foolish and without all vnderstanding? many holy men haue done these workes, and haue preached of them, and wilt thou come, and turne them all to nothing? thou shalt not do it. Thē rage & furie beginneth, yea persecution, slaying and murdering, and the Deuil will seeme to haue a iust cause, howsoeuer the matter goeth. Thus much shall suffize at this time concerning this text. Now ye must take especiall heede, that out of the Gospells ye learne throughly, how all things consist in the onely person, whose name is Christ, and lay vp this in the depth of your hart, that a Christian hath his name of Christ. For I know how much it auaileth both in tentation and in aduersitie to hold that fast. Let vs now by prayer call for the grace of God, that at the last we may with most earnest zeale and hartie affection embrace true Christianitie, Amen.

Satan a most grieuous enemie to the preaching of the Gospell.

A

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, VPON THE GOSPELL ON SAINCT THOMAS DAY

CONCERNING THE WORKES WHICH Christ hath wrought for vs, wherein is contained a most sweete consolation against the Law, Sinne, Death, and Satan.

Ioh. 20.

Verse 24. THomas one of the twelue, called Didimus, was not with them when Iesus came.

25. The other Disciples therefore sayd vnto him we haue seene the Lord: but he sayd vnto them: except I see in his hands the print of the nayles, and put my finger into the print of the nayles, and put myne hand into his side, I will not beleeue it.

26. And eyght dayes after againe his Disciples were within, & Thomas with them. Thē came Iesus when the dores were shut, and stoode in the middes, and sayd: Peace be vnto you.

27. After sayd he to Thomas, Put thy finger here, and see myne handes, & put forth thyne hand, and put into my side, and be not faithles, but faithfull.

28. Then Thomas aunswered and sayd vnto him: Thou art my Lord and my God.

29. Iesus sayd vnto him: Thomas because thou hast seene me, thou beleeuest. blessed are they, that haue not seene and haue beleeued.

The ſumme of this Goſpell.

1 *THomas doth not beleeue that Chriſt is riſen from the dead, but when he ſeeth and feleth him.*

2 *The Diſciples beleue not without manifeſt ſignes. But bleſſed are they that haue not ſeene, but doe beleeue the word onely.*

3 *It is a great matter to know Chriſt God and man. He which attaineth to this knowledg of Chriſt, feareth neither ſinne nor death, neither the deuill nor hell: briefly he is quiet from all anguiſh & tentation. For he hath a greater and mightier then he which is in the world, as Iohn ſayth in his firſt Epiſtle chap. 4.*

The expoſition of this Goſpell.

I Know nothing more certaine concerning S Thomas, then that which this Goſpell mentioneth of him. Other things which are written of him in the booke of Legends, are moſt impudent lyes. And albeit they were partly true, yet haue they no authoritie, neither make vs any thing the better. Wherefore we wil leaue them vntouched, & ſpeake ſomething of this Goſpell, which ſhal be more profitable & neceſſary for vs then al thoſe Legends. The former part of this Goſpell fell out about the euentyde of the Paſſeouer, when two had returned from Emmaus, & ſhewed vnto the other Diſciples, that the Lorde was riſen againe. The latter part fell out the eight day after the Paſſeouer. It is meruelous how comfortable this Goſpell is, ſhewing vnto you, the frutes of faith, namely peace, and ioye, as Paule ſayth Rom. 5. being iuſtified therefore by faith, we haue peace toward God, through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But now we will entreat in few wordes, what this is that the Lord ſheweth to his Diſciples his handes and his feete, whereby is declared vnto vs, what commoditie we haue by Chriſt, whereunto he profiteth vs, and what we muſt looke for of him. It is engrafted in the harts of all men as it were by nature, to haue a certen wil to be honeſt & godly, & euery one thinketh how he may come to ſaluation, wherby it hath come to paſſe, that one hath inuented this thing, an other that, being verily perſuaded, that therby he ſhould make God fauourable vnto him, and obtaine heauen, but none ſuch at any time hath ſtoode in

the

ỳ right way, forasmuch as all haue had this drift, that they might procure Gods fauour by deedes and good workes. Notable Doctors also and holy fathers haue written & taught many thinges, how we might attaine vnto godlines. About this they haue miserably troubled them selues, but as we see, and to our notable losse haue felt, they haue done litle. Wherefore it is exceeding necessary, ỳ some sound knowledge be had hereof, wherby we must endeuour to true godlines, forasmuch as it is a thing of no smal importãce. For he ỳ is deceiued here, loseth ỳ summe & chiefe point of all Christianitie: herof therfore we must now speake somwhat.

True & sound righteousnes consisteth not in our owne workes, but in the workes of an other. Take an example hereof: One buildeth temples, an other for religion sake goeth to S. Iames, to Aquisgrane, to Rome, to the holy sepulcher, the third pineth him selfe with fastings, prayeth, weareth a cowle, goeth bare foote, or worketh some other such worke whatsoeuer it be, these are our owne workes. God hath not commaunded them, but men and hypocrites, iustifiers of them selues haue inuented them, and haue thought that they are precious good workes, and greatly esteemed of God, sweetely persuading them selues, that they are by them deliuered from sinnes, and that God is pacified towards them. But these workes chosen of their owne proper will, are nothing worth at all, neither can stand, forasmuch as they proceede not of faith, yea they are sinnes, as Sainct Paule sayth Rom. 14. Whatsoeuer is not of faith, is sinne. These our workes therefore are defiled and vncleane in the sight of God, yea he doth abhorre and loath them. Wherefore if we will haue to doe with God, we must not ascend trusting to our owne workes, but to the workes of an other. But which are those workes of an other, that are allowed of God? Truely the workes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, whom God the father sent downe from heauen, that by his death and passion he might satisfie for our sinnes. This satisfaction fel out vpon this occasion: We were subiect to great daunger, grieuous tyrants had power ouer vs, which day and night without ceasing did vexe vs. The law which God gaue vnto man, did vrge vs, and required many thinges of vs, which we were not able to performe, and therefore it condemned vs. Sinne also did ly vpon vs as a heauy burden which the lawe did oftimes make greater & greater. Death went about to deuour vs, inasmuch as it is the

True righteousnes is obtained, not by our owne workes, but by the works which Christ hath wrought for vs.

The miserable case wherin man was before he was deliuered by Christ.

wages of sinne, Satan also endeuoured to throw vs downe headlong to hell, inasmuch as he would punish vs for our sinnes committed: all thinges were full of trembling and anguish.

God taking pitie vpon this so great calamity, sent his only begotten sonne, and that of his meere grace & goodnes, without our desart, that he might deliuer vs out of so great tyrannie, which he mightely did after this sorte: He satisfied the law, and fulfilled it perfectly. For he loued God with all his heart, and with all his soule, & with all his strength, he loued his neighbour also as himselfe, in these the whole law and the Prophetes do consist. Nowe whatsoeuer Christ did, it consisted in these two. He loued God, inasmuch as he obeyed his will, he tooke vpon him the nature of man, and performed in all obedience those thinges that were enioyned him of the father, as Paul saith Phil. 2. He became obedient to the father vnto the death, euen the death of the crosse: Secondly, he loued his neighbour: for all ỳ workes which he did in the earth, tended vnto this end, that he might therby profit his neighbour, and therefore he so loued his neighbour, that he euen died for him, as he saith himselfe to his disciples Joh. 15. Greater loue then this hath no man, when any mã bestoweth his life for his friends: S. Paul doth more set forth this, saying, for his enemies, whē he writeth thus Rom. 5. But God setteth out his loue towards vs, seing that while we were yet sinners Christ died for vs. Forasmuch then as Christ hath so fullfilled ỳ law, it could not accuse him, neither was sinne of any force with him. He set vpon it, and did preuaile ouer it, and swallowed it vp, it was enforced to be extinguished of him, no otherwise then a sparke of fire in the most wide sea. For in him was nothing but meere righteousnes. Death also came, and went about to deuour him, it deuoured him in deede, but it could not digest him, it was enforced to yeeld him vp againe, yea and this deuouring was an vtter discommoditie to death, for the case being quite altered, Christ deuoured death it selfe. For it had set vpon him, against whom it had no right, forasmuch as not a whit of sinne did appeare in him. Where sinne is not, there death hath nothing to doe, as Sainct Paule sayth. 1. Cor. 15. The stinge of death is sinne, with this it killeth, otherwise it should be dull, and haue no strength. Satan also made a triall of his strength in him, but in vaine, and to his owne griefe, for he layd handes on him, with whom he had nothing

Christ hath fulfilled the law, preuailed against sinne, ouercome death and vanquished Satan.

thing to doe. The wretch was ouercome in this conflict, and wēt away with shame, as Christ sayth, Ioh. 14. The Prince of this world commeth, and hath nought in me. Hell also did open his mouth, and would haue deuoured Christ, but contrariwise it was deuoured of him. And so in this conflict the Law, Sinne, Death, Satan and hell were vanquished, ouer all which he triumphed & gloried with great pompe, as Paule sayth Col. 2.

All these thinges were not onely done for our commoditie, but also if we beleeue in this Lorde Christ, they are giuen vnto vs. For whatsoeuer he hath, it serueth for vs, yea he himselfe is ours, as Paul sayth Rō. 8. God spared not his owne sonne, but gaue him for vs all to death, how shall he not with him giue vs all thinges also? So that I my boldly glorie of all victorie, which he obtained ouer the law, sinne death, the deuill, and may chaleng to my selfe all his workes, euen as if they were myne owne, and I my selfe had done them, so that I beleeue in Christ. Other wise his workes shall profit me nothing at all, if they were not giuen vnto me. These are the workes of an other which doe commende vs before God, and saue vs. Our owne workes, shall doe nothing, we are weaker, then that we can resist euen the least sinne, so farre is it of, that we are able to encounter with death, Satan, and hell. Wherefore when the Law shall come, and accuse thee, that thou doost not obserue it, send it vnto Christ, and say: There is that man which hath fulfilled the law, to him I cleaue, he hath fulfilled it for me, and hath giuen his fulfilling vnto me: when it heareth these thinges, it will be quiet. If sinne come, and would haue thee by the throte, sende it vnto Christ, and saye: As much as thou mayst doe agaynst him, so much right shalt thou haue against me: for I am in him, and he is in me. If death creepe vpon thee, and attempt to deuoure thee, saye vnto it: Good Maistres death, doost thou knowe this man? come and byte out his tooth, hast thou forgotten howe litle thy byting preuailed with him once? goe to if it be a pleasure vnto thee, encounter with him agayne. Thou hadst perswaded thy selfe, that thou shouldest haue preuayled somewhat agaynst him, when he did hange betweene two theeues, & dyed an ignominious death, which was counted cursed both before God and the worlde. But what didst thou gayne thereby? Thou didst byte in deed, but it turned worst to thy selfe. I pertaine to this man, I am his, and he is myne,

The beleeuers by faith enioy the workes of Christ as their owne.

How a Christian may notably comfort him selfe against the law, sinne death, and Satan.

and where he abydeth, there also will I abyde. Thou couldest hurte him nothinge, wherefore also let me alone. After the same sorte, if the Deuill, if hel, come violently vpon thee, and trouble thee, send them vnto Christ, and thou shalt easily make them to cease.

The inestimable commoditie which the faithfull enioy through Christ.

And thus you see what Christ is vnto vs, namely such a man as is giuen vnto vs of God, that he might extinguish sinnes, vanquish death, destroy hell, ouercome the Deuill, and all these for our commoditie. If he had not done this, nor giuen vnto vs these thinges, we had bene for euer vnder the curse of the law, vnder sinne, vnder death, vnder the deuill, and vnder hell. God deliuered vs from these by that Christ. Wherfore S. Paul sayth out of the Prophet Osee. 1. Cor. 15. Death is swallowed vp into victorie. O death where is thy sting? O hell where is thy victorie? The stinge of death is sinne, and the strength of sinne is the law. But thanks be vnto God, which hath giuen vs victorie through our Lord Iesus Christ. Hereof we may easily vnderstande, what kinde of workes those be, which doe make vs entire and righteous before God. Surely they are the workes of an other, and not our owne workes chosen of our selues. Wherefore the whole Papacie falleth here, with all the most precious and holy workes thereof, which hath this drift onely, that miserable, wretched, and blinded men may be persuaded, that they obtayne heauen by their merites, and their owne workes. Hereupon haue sprong so many orders, that they can not almost be numbred, of which one striued to be holier then an other, according as they exercised harder, greater, and weightier workes. But this their miserable labour, anguish, prayers, fastinges, chastising of the body, and such like, were vaine workes, and of no value at all, neither had they so much power, that they were able to take away so much as euen the least sinne, which they call venial. They were altogither vnmindefull of this saying Esay 29. which the Lord repeteth Mat. 15. This people draweth nere vnto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lippes, but their hart is farre of frō me. But in vaine they worship me, teaching such doctrines, as are nothing els but the precepts of men. Herupō now thou maist gather with thy selfe, that all holy men although they be exceeding holy, yet do obtaine saluation, not by their owne holines, merites or workes. And not so much as Mary her selfe the mother

We are iustified before God by no workes or merits of our owne, but onely by the workes of Christ.

mother of God, was made righteous & holy in respect of her virginitie, or in that she was the mother of God, but saluation hath cõe vnto all by Iesus Christ, as by the workes of an other. Wherfore this is diligently to be noted, that our felicity doth not consist in our owne workes, but in ỳ workes of an other, namely of Christ Iesus our Sauiour, which we obtaine through only faith in him.

This also the history of the Gospell seemeth to signifie, when as the Lorde sheweth to his disciples, but specially to Thomas, his handes & feete. By which deede he declareth, that it was necessary that those handes and feete should do these things, & that no other workes, that is, their owne, & not the workes of an other, do pertaine vnto saluation. For in the Scriptures by handes and feete, workes & conuersation are signified. These hands and feete Christ doth as yet eftsoones shew vnto vs & say: Behold, I am ỳ onely man, whose workes & conuersation are of force with God, thou shalt labour in vaine with thine owne workes, thine owne righteousnes maketh nothing hereunto, it hath an other end. If thou be righteous, it is profitable to thee among mẽ, here in earth thou hast the glorie & praise thereof, as Paul sayth Rom. 4. But before God this thy righteousnes is of no estimation, thou must set in place thereof an other, namely mine, this God my father doth allow. For I haue deliuered thee from sinnes, death, the deuell, hell, & from all euell, thou shouldest neuer haue escaped out of these by thine owne power, but hadst lyen as yet most deepely drowned in them. I haue appeased the wrath of God, and of an angrie iudge, haue made him, a gentle, mercifull, and gracious father, beleeue this and it goeth well with thee, thou art then safe, entire, and righteous. Beware that thou presume not to deale before God with thine owne workes, but if thou wilt do any thing with him, creepe into me, put on me, and thou shalt obtaine of my Father, whatsoeuer thou desirest and askest, as he him selfe sayth vnto his Disciples Ioh. 16. Verely, verely I say vnto you, whatsoeuer ye shall aske the Father in my name, he will giue it you. Wherefore as from the beginning sinne which was an others, hath bene deriued vnto vs from Adam, for neither I, nor thou haue eate of the apple: so also by the righteousnes of an other we must be restored vnto righteousnes and integritie. This other is Christ Iesus, by whose righteousnes and workes we are all saued, as I haue nowe sufficiently declared. This S. Paule

Handes and feete what they commonly signifie in the Scripture.

hath verie pithily comprehended euen in one sentence, where 1. Cor. 1 he sayth thus: Christ Iesus is made vnto vs of God wisedom, and righteousnes, and sanctification, & redemption, that according as it is written, he that reioyceth, let him, reioyce in the Lord. And Rom. 4. he sayth: Iesus Christ was deliuered to death for our sinnes, and is risen againe for our iustification. In these two litle sentences are briefly comprised, & ioyned togither, whatsoeuer thinges we must looke for from Christ.

The preaching of Christ is cõted foolishnes of the vnbeleeuers, but of the faithfull the power and wisedome of God.

Howbeit all these thinges are enioyned by faith, for he that is without faith, to him they are vnpossible to be comprehended, yea they are counted foolishnes to reason, & to the world, as Paul sayth. 1. Cor 1. Christ vnto the Iewes is euen a stumbling block and vnto the Grecians, foolishnes, that is, when Christ is preached, that he is our righteousnes, that saluation commeth vnto vs by him, and that by him we are made the children of euerlasting life, without our owne workes and righteousnes, then those holy men, and iustifiers of them selues are offended, no otherwise then the Iewes. Moreouer to the prudent and wise men of this world, it seemeth foolishnes and a cereaine ridiculous thing, that a man being fastened to the crosse and put to death, doth performe these thinges. Whatsoeuer therefore is counted righteous, holy, wise and prudent in the eyes of the world, it is offended and stumbleth at this Christ. But, Paule sayth moreouer. Vnto thẽ which are called, both of the Iewes & Grecians, we preach Christ, the power of God, and the wisedom of God. He sayth also Rom. 1. The Gospell of Christ is the power of God vnto saluation to euery one that beleeueth, to the Iew first & also to the Grecian. For by it the righteousnes of God is reuealed from faith to faith as it is written Haba. 2. The iust shall liue by faith. Wherefore the Lord sayth very well to the Disciples of Iohn: Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me. So thou seest now plainly, that this faith which we haue in Christ, commeth by the preaching of the Gospell, as Paule affirmeth Rom. 10. Faith is by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Here, here I say doth all the force consist, by the word of God, not by the worde of man. The word of God doth these thinges, not when we publish indulgences, or preach of workes, as hitherto (alas) it hath bene done, to our exceeding losse, as well in the good thinges of the body, as of ỳ soule: We made no account of goods which we bestowed plentifully

tifully, vnles we had afflicted our body with fastings, chastisement, pilgrimages, and such like trifles. In deede these thinges had bene to be graunted and borne, if they had not with a false cõfidence in such doing, so miserably and lamentably led vs away & seduced vs from a true faith & confidence in God through Christ. But praise be vnto God, that we haue for the most part perceiued such delusions. For the world was so ful of this miserie and preaching, that it did almost ouerflow, which surely came by the vengeance and wrath of God, for that we contemned his word, & followed mens fables, yea our owne wittes and opinions. Then we were in so great blindnes, that we did almost without difference beleeue euery man, what kinde of worke soeuer he brought and gloriously set forth. From these deceitfull follies our consciences are now deliuered and set free, but no man doth so much as once giue thanks to God therefore. If we shal be contemptuously negligent, a more grieuous miserie shall light vpon vs then this was. Neither should that come vnto vs vndeseruedly, forasmuch as we do greatly procure these euills against our selues by our vnthankfulnes. When as before we gaue with so great aboundance and plentye, that by our liberalitie they were made almost Lordes of the world, nowe hardly six or seuen poore men are maintained in a citie, yea now the minister of a Parish Church hath not sufficient wherwith to liue. Howbeit do not impute this peruerse kind of liuing to the Gospell, as our aduersaries now impudently doe. It is not meete, that thou suffer thy poore neighbour by thee to neede: Yea rather the whole Gospell doth specially vrge this, that thou haue a care of thy neighbour, and that thou be seruiceable toward him, that thou helpe him both with thy cõsell, & substance, euen as God hath hath holpen and instructed thee.

The faithfull man exerciseth charitie toward his neighbour.

Such a one without dout he that is endued wt true faith sheweth him selfe: for he bursteth forth, & behaueth him selfe so toward others, as he hath tried God towards him selfe, & as he desireth to be done to him selfe, if he were pressed with pouerty, anguish & necessity. God needeth not our good works, our prayers, fastings, & buildings of temples, founding of Masses, do displease him, he requireth not our sacrifices, but rather as Esay saith, hateth & abhorreth thẽ. He is content with this one thing, that we acknowledge him for our God, trust in him, giue him thanks, as he saith Psal. 51. Heare, O my people, & I will speake, I my selfe will te-

ſtifie againſt thee O Iſraell : For I am God euen thy God. I will not reproue thee, becauſe of thy ſacrifices, or for thy brunt offerings: becauſe thy were not alway before me . I will take no bullocke out of thy houſe, nor he goates out of thy foldes. For al the beaſtes of the foreſt are mine, and ſo are the cattels vpon a thouſand hills. I know all the foules vpon the mountaines, and the wild beaſts of the field are in my ſight. If I be hungrie, I wil not tell thee: for the whole world is mine and al that is therein. Thinkeſt thou that I will eate bulles fleſh, and drinke the blood of goats? Offer vnto vnto God thankes giuing, & pay thy vowes vnto the moſt hieſt. And call vpon me in the time of trouble, ſo will I deliuer thee, and thou ſhalt praiſe me. **But God ſendeth vs douneward with our woꝛks to our neeighbours, to the miſerable, afflicted, & them that be doyde of comfoꝛt. It is our partes to helpe them, to comfoꝛt thē, to teach and inſtruct them. And whatſoeuer benefit we ſhal beſtow vpon thē, that we ſhal beſtow vpon God & his chꝛiſt, as he ſhal ſay in ẏ laſt day** Whatſoeuer ye haue done vnto one of the leaſt of theſe my breathrē, ye haue done it vnto me. **Thus ye now haue heard, that we are iuſtified & made righteous by ẏ woꝛks of an other, namely, by ẏ woꝛks of Chꝛiſt, which we enioy only by faith: ẏ ſame faith charity doth naturally accompany, wherby we do ſo to our neighbour, as we do acknowledg that God hath done vnto vs. Herof ye haue elſewhere heard moꝛe: here we will now make an end, & cal foꝛ the grace of God.**

A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, VPON THE GOSPELL ON SAINCT MATTHIAS DAY.

Matth. 11.

Verſe 25. AT that time Ieſus aunſwered and ſaid: I giue the thankes O Father, Lord of heauen & earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe thinges from the wiſe and men of vnderſtanding, and haſt opened.

pened them vnto children.

26. It is ſo, O Father becauſe thy good pleaſure was ſuch.

27. All things are giuẽ vnto me of my Father: & no mã knoweth the Sonne but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, & he to whom the Sonne will reueale him.

28. Come vnto me all ye that are wearie & laden, and I will refreſh you.

29. Take my yoke on you and learne of me: for I am meeke and lowlie in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt vnto your ſoules.

30. For my yoke is eaſie, and my burden is light.

The ſumme of this Goſpell.

1 *REaſon is not capable of the Goſpel. For as Paul 1. Co. 2. ſayth.* The natural man perceiueth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are fooliſhnes vnto him: neither cã he know thẽ, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. *Wherfore when reaſõ ſeketh ſaluatiõ in worldly wiſedõ & fooliſhnes, it findeth it not.*

2 *Chriſt calleth them children here, which truſt not to their owne wiſedome and righteouſnes, but do beleeue onely.*

3 *As Childrẽ only do abtaine ſaluatiõ, ſo the Father alſõ cã not be known, vnles he be reuealed by Chriſt: that is, our miſedõ doth not know God the father. But when as through faith we are taught and inſtructed in bearing the croſſe, then the power of God, becommeth known vnto vs. Therfore alſo he afterward cõforteth thẽ, vpon whõ the croſſe is layd, ſaying:* My yoke is eaſie and my burden light.

The expoſition of the text.

THis text toucheth as it were, the verie pith and marrow of the Goſpell. Other places of Scriptnre wherein the miracles and doinges of Chriſt are rehearſed, haue not ſo much cõfort as thoſe in which thoſe ſermons of Chriſt to the people are conte-

ned, wherein he doth so louingly teach vs, and allure vs to him selfe. I am not so certaine of the fauour, which I see shewed to others in working miracles, as if I haue the plaine wordes, before myne eyes. It is a farre greater comfort also vnto me, to heare such louing admonitions and allurements, then the preaching of miracles: Albeit they also confirme my faith, and are examples, that, as he hath holpen them, so also he will helpe me. Moreouer this Gospell entreateth of the knowledge of God the father, and of Christ his sonne, shewing also whereof such knowledge doth consist. Now that the meaning thereof may be well knowne, it is requisite to vnderstād aright these two words, wisemen, and children or babes. But lest when we here it: we say: this pertaineth nothing to vs, it is spokē to others, as the Iewes said to the Prophets, which referred all thinges to the Gentiles, the wordes going before do sufficiently shew, vnto whom, or of whom these wordes of Christ are spoken. For before he speaketh of them that contemne the Gospell, not vouchsafeing to embrace it, whose dutie notwithstanding especially was to embrace it, inasmuch as they would seeme alone to be them, that were occupied in the word of God, and were to be counted for the people of God. Of such he sayth thus: Whereunto shall I liken this generation? it is like vnto litle children which sit in the markets, and call vnto their fellowes, and say: we haue piped vnto you, and ye haue not daunced: we haue mourned vnto you, and ye hane not lamented. Which the Lord applieth to himselfe, and vnto Iohn the Baptist: as if he would say: we haue preached vnto you the Gospell: Iohn with a certaine seueritie and austeritie, but I with verie great clemencie and gentlenes. But ye cōtemne our preaching and will not receiue it, ye shall at the last feele without dout to your great euel, what it is to dispise the word of God. This is very true, howsoeuer thou preches̄t to ṕ people, whether thou be faire spoken or seuere, gētle or vngētle, they wel alwayes seeme to haue some cause or other to complaine of thee.

These the Lord calleth here wise, and men of vnderstanding, to these the Gospell is hyd. He meaneth not here those wise men which are truely wise in diuine matters. For it is a great commendation, if one be worthy to be called wise and prudent. True wisedom is nothing els but the knowledge of God, to wit, when as I know what we must thinke of God, and do vnderstand his will

True wisedome what it is.

will. But prudence signifieth abilitie and knowledge to iudge of worldly thinges, what is right or wrong, which Paule often ioyneth together, especially in his Epistle to the Ephesians chap. 1. and in his Epistle to the Colossians chap. 1 Of such wisedome Christ speaketh not here, but of worldly wisedome, which puffeth vp men, and excludeth the true wisedome of God. We are all of this disposition by nature, ofsoones to rise against the wisedome of God. Prudence.

That is called good, by the instinct of humane wisedome, which bringeth pleasure, honour, and profite, but those thinges that are contrary to these, as affliction, dishonour, losse, those are called euell. For mans nature can seeke nothing els at all, but those thinges that are his owne, that which pleaseth and profiteth him, that he doth, especially like: But that which displeaseth him, he counteth the worst of all thinges, although it be the best. Wherefore as I haue sayd, the Lord speaketh here of those wise and prudent men, which with their owne wisedome striue against the wisedome of God. Worldly wisedome seemeth to it selfe to be so great, that is it not content to rule onely these worldly and temporall thinges, but taketh also vpon it selfe to haue the ouersight of heauenly things, it alwayes searcheth out and imagineth some new thing, euen in spirituall and diuine matters. So mans owne wisedome hath inuented shauen crownes and cowles, & almost all that, wherein the papacie consisteth, euery one hath chosen his proper worke to himselfe, this man hath inuented this, an other hath inuented that, and if this be abolished, and doth not greatly please, byandby they finde out some other thing, as (alas) we haue seene, and do as yet see, neither is there any measure in these trifles, whereupon it commeth, that we can hardly away with the word of God and the truth, but are alwayes delighted to inuent some new thing. For truly this is certaine, as often as we ordaine a new worship of God contrarie to the word of God, we are byandby blynded, & fall from errour to errour, then which calamitie none greater can come vnto vs. Wherefore Paule. 2. Thess. 2. sayth: Therefore God shall send them strong delusion, that they should beleeue lies, that all they might be damned which beleeued not the truth, bnt had pleasure in vnrighteousnes. Yea and at the last they become so blinde, that they vnderstand nothing at all of God, as it is in the. 14. Psal. The foole Humane or worldly wisdome.

hath ſayd in his hart, there is no God. For it can not be that the naturall man, which conſiſteth of fleſh & blood, and is not inſtructed by the ſpirite of God, ſhould iudge & vnderſtand thoſe thinges which are of God, as Paule. 1. Cor. 2. witneſſeth: The naturall man perceiueth not the thinges of the Spirite of God: for they are fooliſhnes vnto him: neither can he knowe them, becauſe they are ſpiritually decerned. He which will reade more hereof, let him peruſe the firſt chapter of the Epiſtle of Paule to the Romans, there ſhall he plainely enough perceiue, what blindnes is, and what puniſhment doth enſue, if the worde of God being neglected, we folow our owne inuentions and counſels.

All which we ſee in our ſpirituall Monkes, Nunnes, and ſacrificing Prieſtes, and do too truly try it. God graunt that they may at the laſt repent, and giue vnto God his glorie. S. Paule ſayth there of the Gentiles, that they turned the glorie of the incorruptible God to the ſimilitude of the image, not onely of a corruptible man, but alſo of birdes, and foure footed beaſtes, and of creeping thinges. So doe our Papiſtes alſo, yea and much more foolihly and madly then the Gentiles: for they make vnto themſelues a god which is delighted with a ſhauen crowne, with cowles, with eating of fleſh and fiſh, &c. Wherefore God hath giuen them vp thorough their hartes lufts vnto vncleannes, as he did the Gentiles, and that ſo filthily, that it is better to conceale it, then to rehearſe it. For if ſuch filthie and wicked thinges were committed among the Gentiles, which had many Wiues and many Concubines, what would not the Spirituall men commit, which haue forbidden the vſe of women and matrimonie? Briefly, ſo is it wont to come to paſſe, where Satan beareth the ſway, and the worde of God is wreſted to ſerue mens affections, which euery man may aſſuredly perſwade himſelfe to be ſo, yea theſe thinges are ſo knowen and vndoutedly true, that children in the ſtreetes ſpeake and ſing of them. Now this is not to be vnderſtood of ſpirituall men onely, but euen the vulgar ſort and common multitude do liue ſo, when ỹ word of God is not admitted. As we ſee Citizens to vtter counterfet wares, Merchauntes to deceiue in ſelling merchandice, and ſo many craftie practizes, ſo many deceits in ſubtill dealing, ſo much regard of vſurie and priuate profite, that it can not be rehearſed. As yet they endeuour againe to bring in the Maſſe, to ſet vp their tapers &c: being perſwaded

ſwaded that God is pacified with ſuch trifles, reuoluing this onely in their myndes, that their fame may remaine vntouched and vnhurt in the worlde, howſoeuer they agree with God. Of ſuch wiſe and prudent men Chriſt ſpeaketh here in the Goſpell, which heare the Goſpell in deede, and ſee miracles, but it profiteth them nothing, foraſmuch as their hart is not touched. Now Chriſt ſayth thus:

Verſ. 25. I giue thee thankes O Father, Lord of heauen and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe thinges from the wiſe and men of vnderſtanding, and haſt opened them vnto children:

Verſ. 26. It is ſo, O Father, becauſe thy good pleaſure was ſuch.

Chriſt ſpeaketh not here of very children: there may be ſome notable doctor, whom he calleth a childe in this place. Contrariwiſe there may be a ruſticall fellow, whom he calleth here wiſe and prudent. In the eight Pſal. Dauid alſo calleth theſe infantes and children, when he ſayth: Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength becauſe of thine enimies. They ſurely by whom God ordaineth ſtrength againſt his enimies, which ſhould extoll his glorie through the whole worlde, were not babes or children in very deede. Thoſe therefore the Lord calleth children here, which count their owne workes for nothing, attribute nothing to their owne wiſedome, make nothing of themſelues, but thinke God onely to be wiſe and of vnderſtanding. Wherefore they are humble and lowly, and how great ſoeuer they are, doe ſubmit themſelues to God, of whom onely they ſuffer themſelues to be taught. Now other be ouer wiſe, and will learne nothing of God, yea they preſumptuouſly take to themſelues iudgement and cenſure ouer the doctrine and workes of God, whereof thou mayſte read in the firſt and ſecond chapter of the Epiſtle to the Corinthians. Wherefore Chriſt ſayth Luke. 16. The children of this world are in their generation wiſer then the children of light. But the fooliſh children of light are of greater eſtimation before God, then the wiſe children of this worlde. Of theſe children the Lord ſpeaketh: Thou haſt hid them from the wiſe and men of vnderſtanding, and haſt reuealed them to babes. For the wiſe and prudent knowe not

Whom the Lord calleth here childrē or babes.

theſe thinges, but the childzen and fooles know them. How commeth it to paſſe that the wiſe know them not? becauſe thou haſt hidden them from them. How doe the childzen know them? becauſe thou haſt reuealed them. What he meaneth hereby, we may gather of thoſe thinges that were ſpoken before, to wit that he had preached the Goſpell of the kingdome of God in many cities of Iudea, as in Chorazin, Bethſaida, and in his owne citie Capernaum, which cities their owne wiſedome being a hinderance and let vnto them, did not receiue the foolyſh preaching of the Goſpell. The Goſpell is a good and ioyfull meſſage, which teacheth me to knowe the glozie of God, by which knowledge I obtaine pardon of my ſynnes, and lyfe eternall: As Chriſt ſayth to his father in the Goſpell of Iohn chap. 17. This is life eternall, that they know thee to be the onely very God, and Ieſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent. He ſayth alſo in this Goſpell: No man knoweth the Sonne but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne will reueale him. Here he ſpeaketh of the knowledge both of the Father and of the Sonne. To whom this is reuealed, he knoweth, and obtaineth eternall life. But the Father hath hid theſe thinges from the wiſe and prudent, that they may not know neither the Father nor the Sonne, and hath reuealed them to childzen, they haue the knowledge both of the Father and the Sonne, and ſo do obtaine euerlaſting life.

The Goſpell a ioyful meſſage.

Moreouer, if theſe thinges be thus, as they be in deede, what ſhall become of free will? Seeing thou ſeeſt ſuch hainous and wicked thinges to be committed in the bodyes, as it is written Rom. 1. goe thy wayes now, and glozy of free will. But this is a goodly free will, to liue in ſuch a filthie life, which is altogether vnworthy of a man, which is vnknowen euen among beaſtes that are without reaſon. Howbeit it is wont ſo to come to paſſe, when God forſaketh vs. As ſoone as we are forſaken of God, by and by Satan commeth, and erecteth his kingdome in vs, wherein nothing els but ſuch wickednelles are committed, which notwithſtanding are ſo craftely coloured, & commended with ſuch a pretence of honeſtie, that it ſeemeth to be a moſt holy, yea and an angelike life. What I pray you can mans ſtrength do here? whereby ſome goe about to bring to paſſe many thinges, ſweetely perſwading themſelues that they ſhall aſcend vp into heauen there-

What ſtate they come into, whom God forſaketh.

by.

by. But thou hearest here that Christ affirmeth, that the Father doth reueale these things: also that it is the good pleasure of the Father that it should be so. Whereby truely he taketh away all the merits of man, here no satisfactions profite, here is no respect of workes, it is done by the will and good pleasure of the Father. For he respecteth not the person, as it appeareth before ỹ world. He doth not contemne and reiect the synner, albeit he come laden with sinnes. After the same sort Christ saith to his disciples Luke 12: Feare not litle flocke, for it is the Fathers pleasure to giue you the kingdome. This the hypocrites and iusticiaries can not abyde, yea they are driuen vnto furie, senslesnes, and madnes, when they see simple receiuers of custome and very publicans to go before them into the kingdome of heauen, they themselues with their holines, and goodly & plausible workes to the worlde, being excluded: Whom would not this driue vnto madnes? who would not take it grieuously, that he himselfe & his things should be in such a case, and nothing at al counted of? But what shouldest thou do, or what shouldest thou murmure? The good pleasure of God is such, to whom he vouchsaueth to open, to him they shalbe opened: and from whom he hideth, from him they are hidden, which count as vndoubtedly true: and marke well that Christ sayth here, It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such, thy good pleasure I say, before the worlde was made, as S. Paule sayth Ephes. 1. God hath chosen vs in Christ, before the foundations of the world were layd, that we should be holy and without blame before him in loue, who hath predestinate vs, to be adopted through Iesus in Christ himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the prayse of the glorie of his grace, wherewith he hath made vs freely accepted in his beloued. Here al merit is excluded, wherfore let it not come into thy mind, that thou shalt obtaine any thing here, by thy desarts, neither let thy workes, wisedome, & merits puffe thee vp. Here al reioycing is taken away, that he that reioyceth, may reioyce in the Lord, as Paule sayth. 1. Cor. 1. It followeth moreouer in the Gospell:

Ver. 27. All things are giuē vnto me of my Father: & no man knoweth the Sonne but the Father: neither knoweth any mā the Father but the Sōne, and he to whom the Sonne will reueale him.

Here thou ſeeſt the ſafetie, which is in the kingdome of Chriſt, by whom we haue knowledge and lyght. If therefore Chriſt holdeth all thinges in his hand, and hath power ouer all thinges as the Father hath, no man can plucke any thing out of his handes, which he himſelfe alſo witneſſeth in Iohn: I giue eternall life to my ſheepe, and they ſhall neuer periſh, neither ſhall any plucke them out of my hand: my Father which gaue them me, is greater then all, and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand. I and my Father are one. Wherefore euery Chriſtian, when he hath receiued the Goſpell, may worthely reioyce, that he is now vnder the tuition of Chriſt, and is not any thing troubled becauſe of his ſinnes. If he hath embraced the Goſpell, Chriſt vnder whom he fighteth will guide the matter excellently well. Satan in deede will tempt him with this and that vice, as, with adulterie, whoredome, theft, ſlaughter, enuie, hatred, wrath, and other like ſynnes. But let him not therefore be diſcouraged, he hath a king, that is ſtrong, & mightie enough, of whom he ſhalbe eaſily defended. Notwithſtanding it wilbe verie hard to ſtand ſtrongly, and nothing to periſhe, wherefore prayer in this caſe is verie needefull, others alſo may by their prayers intreat for thee, that a ſtout courage & manly hart may be giuen vnto thee, to withſtand Satan. But it is certaine, that thou ſhalt not be deſtitute, Chriſt wil eaſily preſerue thee, be not diſquieted in mynde, let it onely be thy care, that thou falleſt not from his kingdome. Moreouer in this Goſpell thou ſeeſt, that Chriſt is both God & man: Man, inaſmuch as he prayſeth God, and giueth him thankes: God, inaſmuch as all thinges are giuen vnto him of the Father. Which ought to be great comfort vnto vs in all thinges that do trouble and afflict vs. Whereas he ſaith: No man knoweth the Sonne but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne will reueale him: he in theſe wordes ouerthroweth free will, which will know God and Chriſt, when and how it pleaſeth it. Here thou haſt plainly, from whence the knowledge of God and of Chriſt is: the Father, ſaith he, knoweth the Sonne, and the Sonne the Father, but how do we know, by this or that preacher? no truely, theſe are onely certaine mere inſtrumentes, but he onely knoweth, to whom the Sonne will reueale. A litle before he ſayd that the Father doth reueale or open, here he attributeth

Ioh. 10.28.

Chriſtians haue cauſe to reioyce although they be diuers wayes aſſailed of Satan, for that they be vnder the tuition of Chriſt, who will defend and preſerue them.

buteth the ſame to the Sonne. Surely both the Father and the Sonne do reueale, and as the Father reuealeth, ſo alſo doth the Sonne: and Chriſt alſo ſayth in Iohn chap. 14. The holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you all thinges. Wherefore as the Father teacheth, ſo teacheth the Sonne, likewiſe alſo teacheth the holy Ghoſt. And where God the Father, and the Sonne, and the holy Ghoſt do not teach, there all thinges remaine voyde of knowledge. It followeth moreouer in the Goſpell.

Verſ. 28. Come vnto me all ye that are wearie and laden, and I will refreſh you.

Verſ. 29. Take my yoke on you, and learne of me: for I am meeke and lowly in hart: and ye ſhall finde reſt vnto your ſoules.

Verſ. 30. For my yoke is eaſie, and my burden is light.

Hitherto we haue heard how the Lord dealeth with the wiſe & prudent, namely that he blindeth them, and hideth the Goſpel frō them. Likewiſe how he is delighted in children and ſimple ones, to wit, that he endueth them with right knowledg of himſelfe, and openeth the Goſpell vnto them. But ſome man may here ſay and complaine: If the matter be ſo, ſurely my conſcience ſhalbe in great daunger, before I heare and know that the Goſpell doth pertaine vnto me. I am a wretched ſynner, and perhaps the Goſpell pertaineth not vnto me, what if I be vnworthie? Chriſt, that he may comfort theſe weake, diſmayed, and troubled conſciences, ſayth: Come vnto me all ye that are wearie and laden, and I will refreſh you. Here are we called vnto comfort. Here forget all thy merit and worthines, for that he plainly ſayth: ye that are wearie and laden, to wit, with the burden of the law, the anguiſh and affliction of ſinne, and wherewithall ſoeuer the conſcience may be troubled. Therefore he doth not expreſſe it by name: for he ſayth not, ye that are troubled with this or that calamitie, but ſimplie, ye that are wearie and laden. Neither will he haue any here excluded, foraſmuch as he ſayth, All, which is a ſinguler and ſpeciall comfort, if any thing trouble vs, what kynde of temptation ſoeuer it be.

What ſoeuer burden we are laden with, we may finde eaſe & comfort in Chriſt, if we flie to him for ſuccour.

Who ſoeuer therefore is ſtriken with the feeling of his ſynne, and knoweth his owne weakenes to fulfill the law of God, let him come hither with a cheareſull and bolde courage, and he

shall certainely receiue comfort. I will refresh you, sayth Christ, as those that are pressed and burdened with sore labour and griefe. Let this onely be thy care, that thou beleeue such a louing bidding and promise. After this sort Christ cried in the temple at Hierusalem at a certaine feast: If any man thirst, let him come vnto me, and drinke. He that beleeueth in me, as sayth the Scripture, out of his bellie shall flow riuers of water of life. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that beleeued in him, should receiue. Which so commeth to passe: he causeth the Gospell to be preached vnto vs, which he that beleeueth, is endued with the holy Ghost, and obtaineth pardon of all his synnes. This is truly to refresh him, whose conscience is troubled, to wit, when he feeleth that his sinnes be forgiuen, and that he is become heyre of the kingdome of God. Neither doth he refresh vs onely in the anguish and temptation of sinne, but he will also be present with vs in other calamities & miseries, in famine, warre, dearth of victuals, and whatsoeuer such like can come, in all these he will not leaue vs destitute of his helpe, as he cared for the Patriarke Ioseph, euen in a straunge Countrey, with whom he was continually present, as well in prosperitie as in aduersitie. Now synne is a grieuous burden, whereof no man is eased, but he whom Christ the sonne of God deliuereth, and that by the holy Ghost, whom he hath merited for vs of the Father, which maketh our hartes cheerefull, and readie to doe all thinges which God requireth of vs.

Ioh.7.37.38. 39.

But what is this that he sayth? Take my yoke on you. Is this to refresh, if I take one burden from one, and lay vpon him an other? This is that, whereof we haue oftentimes spoken, the Gospell doth first make astonied and discourage, and is grieuous to the flesh, for it telleth vs that all our owne thinges are nothing, that our owne holines and righteousnes are of no importaunce, that all thinges which are in vs are damned, that we are the children of wrath and indignation. This is verye hard, and an intollerable burden to the flesh, and therefore he calleth it a burden or yoke. But lest he should terrifie or make afraide any, for that he is of great authoritie, high, and mightie, and therefore can not suffer synnefull and wretched men, or for that he may seeme to be tyrannicall and vngentle, he before cutting of this suspicion, sayth: Learne of me: for I am meeke and lowly in hart.

The yoke of Christ why so called.

hart. Christ will here louingly allure vs to his doctrine, for he had spoken before of the knowledge of the Father, as if he woulde saye: flesche and a fearefull nature counteth me for an austere, seuere, and rigorous man, but I am not of such a nature, yea I am humble and meeke in hart. I doe not terrifie men as Moses doth, I doe not preach: doe this or that, but I preach forgiuenes of sinnes, neither doe I preach that they should giue any thing, but rather that they may receiue. There is not in me ambition and loftines, as is in the Pharises, which desire to be magnified, but I am altogither gentle and lowly in hart, ready to receiue synners. If so be that they fall againe into synnes, notwithstanding I doe not yet cast them from me, if they flye vnto me for succour, and doe with a sure confidence looke for comfort and helpe of me. I doe not curse men as the Pharises doe, which curse them euen for their owne ordinaunces, and for mens deuises, and will sooner suffer all the commaundements of God to be neglected, then one of their decrees and ordinaunces not to be obserued. As we see in the Papacie, where it is counted a greater offence to eate flesh on the fryday, or for a sacrificing Priest to marrie, then to commit twentie adulteries or tenne homicides. But here thou seest that God doth abrogate euen his owne lawe, that he may so much the sooner procure sinners vnto him. Christ humble & meeke.

Christ in a singular signification sayth here, that he is meeke, as if he sayd: I knowe how synners are to be handled, I haue eyed what a fearefull and an afflicted conscience is, as the Epistle to the Hebrues chapter. 5. witnesseth, that he was in all thinges tempted in like sort, except sinne. Wherefore let no man be afrayde of me, I will handle all easily and gently, I will saye nothing with a sowre countenaunce, I make no man afrayde, so as they come boldly vnto me, they shall finde rest to their soules with me. To their soules he sayth, as if he would saye: outwardly in the bodie there may be affliction and trouble, and calamities may ouerwhelme you, but ye ought to beare all these thinges lightly, as he also sayth to his Disciples in the Gospell of John: In me ye shall haue peace, but in the worlde ye shall haue affliction. Wherefore although outwardly all thinges fall out against vs, as though they woulde suppresse and ouer vs, yet are they nothing to be esteemed of: For we They that beleeue in Christ finde rest to their soules, though in their bodies they suffer affliction.

haue the feeling of peace inwardly in our conſcience. And this is the firſt frute of fayth, as Paule ſayth Rom. 5. Therefore being iuſtified by fayth we haue peace toward God through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Now when our conſcience is quieted, and we haue peace with God, nothing is able to moue vs, no nothing ſhall hurt vs, albeit it be euell and againſt vs.

Let no man thinke thus, and ſaye: this is not to amende ones ſtate or caſe, if I take one burden from his necke, and laye on another, as it is before ſayd. For Chriſt ſayth: My yoke is eaſie, and my burden is light, as if he would ſaye: the yoke of the lawe, vnder which ye liued before, was grieuous to be borne, but my burden is not ſo grieuous, it is light, and tollerable, ye may eaſily beare it. Our wiſemen ſaye now, that the yoke of Chriſt is more grieuous, then the yoke of the Lawe was, and they alleage the fifth chapter of Matthewe. But Chriſt doth there interprete the Lawe, how it ought to be vnderſtood, he doth not make lawes, but ſayth, that murders and adulteries proceede from an euell and vncleane hart. And ſo he doth onely expounde the Lawe of Moſes, and preſcribeth not any Lawes there. But the yoke of Chriſt is therefore eaſie, and his burden light, becauſe he taketh awaye, not onely ceremoniall and mans lawes, but euen the whole lawe, the curſe, ſynne, death, and whatſoeuer maye come vnto vs from the Lawe, all this Chriſt taketh awaye from me, and endueth me with his ſpirite, by the motion and inſtinct whereof, I doe gladly, willingly and with pleaſure perfourme all the duties of the Lawe. It is therefore alſo called eaſie, ſweete, and light, for that he himſelfe helpeth vs, and taketh part of the burden, if we be not of ſtrength ſufficient. It appeareth it deede grieuous and intolerable to the worlde, but it is otherwiſe when there is one ready to eaſe the burden. It is a common ſaying: it is good to ſing with a fit compani̅, you two will eaſily beare the burden, although one alone were not of ſtr̅gth ſufficie̅t to beare it. Thus much ſhall ſuffize for the expoſition of this Goſpell.

Why the yoke of Chriſt is ſaid to be eaſie.

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A SERMON OF D. MARTIN LVTHER, VPON THE GOSPELL ON THE FEAST OF S. PHILIP AND IAMES.

Iohn. 14.

Verse. 1. IEsus sayd vnto his Disciples: Let not your hart be troubled: ye beleeue in God, beleeue also in me.

2. In my Fathers house are manie dwelling places: if it were not so, I would haue told you: I go to prepare a place for you.

3. And if I goe to prepare a place for you, I will come againe, and receiue you vnto my selfe, that where I am, there may ye be also.

4. And whither I goe, ye knowe, and the way ye knowe.

5. Thomas sayd vnto him, Lord, we knowe not whither thou goest, how can we then knowe the way?

6. Iesus sayd vnto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man commeth vnto the Father but by me.

7. If ye had knowne me, ye should haue knowne my Father also: and from hence forth ye know him, and haue seene him.

8. Philippe sayd vnto him, Lord, shew vs thy Father, and it suffiseth vs.

9. Iesus sayd vnto him: Haue I bene so long time with you, & hast thou not knowne me? Philip, he that hath seene me, hath seene my Father:

how then ſayeſt thou, Shewe vs thy Father?

10. Beleeueſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The wordes that I ſpeake vnto you, I ſpeake not of my ſelfe, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the workes,

11. Beleeue me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me: at the leaſt beleeue me for the verie workes ſake.

12. Verely, verely I ſay vnto you, he that beleeueth in me, the workes that I doe, he ſhall doe alſo, and greater then theſe ſhal he do: for I go vnto my Father.

13. And whatſoeuer ye aske in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Sonne.

14. If ye ſhal aske any thing in my name, I wil do it.

The ſumme of this Goſpell.

1 *IN this Goſpell is contained a comfort againſt offence that tempteth vs through the croſſe and perſecution.*

2 *Without the merit of Chriſt no man commeth to glorie. Therefore he ſayth:* In my Fathers houſe are many dwelling places. *For many are elect frõ euerlaſting of God the Father, which notwithſtanding can not come vnto glorie without Chriſt.*

3 *The Diſciples beleeued in Chriſt, yet did they not vnderſtand, that he ſhould come vnto glorie by death. Wherein we muſt marke, that fayth being vnperfect in the Apoſtles and Diſciples of Chriſt, is a comfort vnto vs, if we reſt vpon the foundation Chriſt.*

4 *In Philip we ſee a verie groſſe faith, for he will ſee and know by experience. Wherefore Chriſt ſayth: If ye will not beleeue my wordes, at the laſt beleeue the workes, that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.*

5 *Theſe wordes:* I ſay vnto you, he that beleeueth in me, the workes that I do, he ſhall do alſo, &c. *ſhew that Chriſt ſhall raigne in vs, when he is glorified with the Father.*

vnto these dwelling places. For through his operation and working in vs, he maketh vs beleeue the Gospell, by which beleeuing or fayth we are prepared. Which could not be done if Christ should not depart and dy, and so possesse a kingdome ouer all. This therefore is the summe of this text: They are foreseene, whom the Father will glorifie, but they can not be glorified but by Christ, who vnles he take away death and sinne, all shall be in vaine. Here thou seest that all tende vnto this, that Christ is he which prepareth the dwelling places, and that we can not be glorified but by Christ, so that the whole drift of this text is, that we are not iustified by mans strength, nor by our owne merites, but by Christ, which the whole Epistle to the Romans effectually declareth, as also that which is written to the Galathians, and almost al that Paule doth in his Epistles, tendeth to the same ende. It followeth moreouer:

And whither I goe ye knowe, and the way ye knowe. For ye beleeue in me, and haue shewed signes in my name, whereby ye ought now to be certaine who I am, and what I doe, and wherefore I am come. Ye haue also seene and heard the testimonie of the Father of me. Wherefore ye may nowe knowe that the Father will glorifie me, and beleeue that I and the Father are one, it shoulde be therefore superfluous to speake more of these thinges. But the Disciples albeit they were well instructed of the Lord him selfe, and had seene his miracles, yea and they them selues also had preached the Gospell and wrought miracles, were notwithstanding as yet somewhat grosse in vnderstanding, neither did they perceiue whereof he here spake, and what was that way, and whither the Lord did prepare to depart. Wherefore Thomas bursteth forth into open wordes and confesseth freely, that he is ignorant hereof, and sayth thus vnto the Lord: Lord we knowe not whither thou goest: howe can we then knowe the way? Here ye heare and see, that albeit there was faith in the Disciples, notwithstanding they were not as yet perswaded that Christ shoulde be crucified, and by his death shoulde enter into his kingdome, and that the same kingdom should be spirituall, which they did not vnderstand euen after the resurrection of the Lord: Lord, say they, wilt thou at *Act. 1.6.* this time restore the kingdome to Israell? Those good men were as yet perswaded, that it should be a carnal & worldly kingdome,

Such grosse things may here and there be found in the Gospels, by meanes whereof the Disciples did sometime notably stumble and erre. All which were commited to writing, for our comfort & confirmation, that we should not be byandby discouraged, when we haue sometime stumbled in faith, and can not at the first apply our selues to the workes & worde of the Lord. If this happened to these great men, which afterwarde shoulde become pillers of Christianitie, there is no cause truely that any should meruell, if we also sometime faint in faith, yea, and let no man be afraide, although it falleth out that sometime through infirmitie he so do. It is the worke & matter of the Lord, he wil amend these thinges when it seemeth good vnto him.

Comfort for them that be weake in faith and sometime through infirmitie fall.

Now of the wordes we minde to entreate somewhat at large. Not much before, when Christ would confirme his Disciples in faith, he promised them that they should be glorified. Here he addeth and declareth how and by what meanes they must be glorified, affirming that that must be by his departure, that is, by his death, & that by that meane he must obtaine his kingdome. This he hath often repeated vnto them, so that now it did become them to know and vnderstand it. Therefore he sayth: Wheither I goe ye know, and the way ye knowe, but they did not yet throughly vnderstand it, as the wordes of Thomas doe declare. Now, it is certaine that there was faith in the Disciples, which the wordes of Peter proue, who answered Christ in steede of the rest, when he asked them, whether they also would goe away: Peter sayd: Maister to whom shall we goe? Thou hast the wordes of eternall life: and we beleeue and know that thou art Christ the Sonne of the liuing God. This appeareth also by the wordes of the Lord, which he had sayd to them a litle before at his supper: Ye are cleane, which he would not haue sayd, if they had not beleued: they knewe Christ therefore that he is the way to the Father. So they knewe the Father also, for that they had seene the miracles whereby he gaue testimonie of the Sonne, and had heard the voyce of the Father from heauen: This is my beloued Sonne, in whom I am well pleased, heare him. All these thinges did greatly increase faith in the Disciples hartes, notwithstanding they did not yet vnderstand, what they should doe, and what ende concerning the matters of Christ was to be hoped for.

Ioh.6.68.

Set before you an example hereof in Abraham. Although in faith

faith a sonne was conceiued vnto him, neuertheles he was yet ignorant, that he must be offered: Neither did faith manifestly shew it selfe, when a sonne was giuen vnto him. So was it also with the Disciples: although they had faith, notwithstanding they wanted as yet trial of their faith: Now nothing trieth faith better then the crosse and persecution. If Abraham had not bene commaunded to offer his sonne, he had had no trial of his faith. Whē as the Apostles did suffer persecution, they then had a tast and triall of their faith. As long as we may liue without tentation, we thinke that we are endued with a strong faith, but if any aduersitie commeth to vs on any side, we byandby trie what faith we rested vpon. Wherefore S. Paul sayth Rom. 5. We reioyce in tribulation, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth pacience, and pacience experience, & experince hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. After the same sort Salomon also sayth in the Prouerbs: As siluer is fined, and golde tried in the furnace, so doth the Lord trie the hearts. Pro. 17. Such a triall is made by the crosse and persecution, when we are as it were crucified according to our old Adam, by which crucifying our faith is tried, and according to this trial of faith our flesh mortified, the spirit encreasing in the knowledge of Christ. And then is our flesh truely mortified, when we suffer the will of God to beare rule in vs, which is then done when we submit our selues to his will howsoeuer he dealeth with vs, renouncing our owne. This S. Paul wil haue vs to do, when he sayth thus Rom. 12. I beseech you breathren by the mercies of God, that ye giue vp your bodies a liuing sacrifice, holy, acceptable vnto God, which is your reasonable seruing of God. And fashion not your selues like vnto this world, but be ye chaunged by the renuing of your minde, that ye may proue what that good, and acceptable, and pefect will of God is.

When Thomas thus confesseth that he is ignorant whither the Lord goeth, neither knoweth the way, the Lord doth not rebuke him with a sterne countenance, neither by and by casteth him of, nor driueth him frō him, he calleth him not either a grosse asse or oxe, as we are wont to handle the weake, but aunswering him very gently, sayth: I am the way, the truth, and the life. I, sayth the Lord, am the way, by which the father is gone vnto, albeit I be slayne: I cary them that beleeue and are my sheepe, on my shoulders to the Father: no other way beside this leadeth

Christ the way, the truth, and the life.

vnto heauen. He that walketh not this way, goeth out of the way from the Father. I also am the truth. For I am the light which lightneth the worlde, and I teach true doctrine, and make true Christians. Moreouer, I also am the life, for it is I that quicken, he that beleeueth in me shall not dye. This, as I sayd before, is to teach the Gospel, rightly, that is, to shew the true and right way, which leadeth vnto eternall life. When the Disciples knew not ỹ way ỹ leadeth vnto glory, the Lord making no delay, affirmeth vnto them that he is that way. As if he should say: If ye desire to know the way to glory, seeke not the strength, light, & righteousnes of creatures, but looke vnto me: for I am the way, the truth, and the life, although I must be put to death, although I am vile & of no reputation according to the outward appearance: neither let this offend you, that they which be mine, are subiect to persecutions. The right way to the father is found in me, let none remoue you from this perswasion. Therfore he sayth moreouer.

No man cometh vnto the Father but by me. As if he should say: No man can come to the Father by his owne strength or merits: The lawe terrifieth the conscience that it can not goe to the Father: the word of Christ, which iustifieth vs by the righteousnes of Christ, bringeth vs to the Father. Wherupō followeth that which he afterward sayth:

If ye had knowne me ye should haue knowne my Father also. For as no man commeth to the Father, but by the Sonne, so no man knoweth the Father but by Christ the Sonne. First the Fathers will is not knowne, to wit, that he will saue vs, vnles we see it in Christ. He which is in the bosom of the Father, hath reuealed it vnto vs. Secondly the Father is not beleeued. For reason by it selfe doth not vnderstand, that it receiueth any thing of God. Wherefore it is needefull that Christ declare that bountifulnes and goodnes vnto vs. A troubled conscience flieth the Father, neither can it abide to commit it self vnto him. But they that are iustified by the word of Christ, do not any more contemne the Father neither flie him, as the Israelites did, but stande before him as Moses, and are enlightened with diuine light, that they may know the power of God and mercie of the Father. Hereupon commeth trust and confidence in him: hereby we knowe that we receiue all thinges at his handes, and looke for al as well spiritual as corporal things of him. All these we must acknowledge

to

it were appeale to woꝛkes, that they may giue teſtimonie of the woꝛd. As if he ſhould ſay: Seeing that ye can not be content to beleeue the woꝛd, at the leaſt beleeue the ſignes which beare witnes of the woꝛd, and whereby the Father hath giuen teſtimonie of me. Foꝛ the woꝛks and ſignes are teſtimonies of the woꝛd. By theſe woꝛds Chꝛiſt meaneth nothing els but to confirme the conſciences of his Diſciples, and of all vs againſt the offence of the croſſe. Foꝛ conſciences wil know and not beleeue the bare woꝛds of God, but doe alwayes doubt and ſay: What if God careth not foꝛ thee? and haue ſuch like cogitations. Holy & godly men ſeeme foꝛ the moſt part to be neglected, as abiects and moſt contemptible men, inaſmuch as the woꝛld according to the will & luſt thereof, rageth and pꝛactizeth tyrannie againſt them, and doth almoſt what it liſt. Hereupon they are in anguiſh & in daunger of faith, & deſire to know the will of God toward them. Theſe Chꝛiſt comfoꝛteth, that they may ſeeke no other comfoꝛt but in him and in his death, and beleeue that he is life, that he beareth rule, and maketh aliue them that be dead. And that they ſhould nothing doubt hereof he maketh them yet moꝛe certaine, and ſayth:

Verely, verely I ſay vnto you, he that beleeueth in me, the workes that I doe, he ſhall doe alſo, and greater then theſe ſhall he doe. As if he ſhould ſay: Doubt not any thing but that ye ſhall know the Father by me, and that my woꝛd is the power of God, & that by my woꝛd ye ſhall be ſuſteined, although I be euen crucified. Ye ſhall haue triall hereof in your ſelues, foꝛ if ye beleeue in me, ye ſhall not onely woꝛke ſuch woꝛkes and ſhew ſuch ſignes as I doe, but euen greater. Which came to paſſe after the aſcention of Chꝛiſt, when the Apoſtles wꝛought greater miracles as well among the Iewes as Gentiles, then Chꝛiſt him ſelfe. But what is the cauſe hereof? The Loꝛd himſelfe addeth it ſaying: For I goe vnto my Father. That is, I will begin a kingdome, where I will fulfill all thinges. Here the Loꝛd annexeth the concluſion of all the queſtions and conſolations going beſoꝛe. Foꝛ a litle beſoꝛe Chꝛiſt had taught, that the Father is known by him, and that is becauſe he is in the Father, hetherefoꝛe is ſhewed by that woꝛde, by which the Father is ſhewed. But that ye might confirme this to wit, that his woꝛde is the power of the Father, he added and ſayd: He that beleeueth in me, the works that I do, he ſhall doe alſo. That is, by faith in me ye alſo ſhall doe thoſe

woꝛkꝭ, and know that my woꝛd is the vertue and power of God. But why doth he ſay: I goe to the Father? I aunſwere. Becauſe Chꝛiſt is in the Father, theꝛefoꝛe doth he the woꝛkes of the Father, but we doe them not alſo theꝛefoꝛe, but foꝛ that Chꝛiſt who is in the Father, is now in vs. Foꝛ to goe to the Father is to fulfill all thinges, ꝧ as Paule accoꝛding to the ſaying of the Pſalme declareth, to giue giftes vnto men, to lighten and to ſanctifie. Foꝛ this is the kingdom of Chꝛiſt, whereby he reigneth in earth in the hartes of the beleeuers, and ſitteth vpon the thꝛone of his Father Dauid. The Loꝛd alſo ſpeaketh theſe woꝛdes: I goe to the Father, to comfoꝛt his Diſciples. Foꝛ as he did befoꝛe begin to confiꝛme them, that they ſhould not be troubled and offended, although he ſhould dye, but courageouſly cleaue to him, and beleeue in him: So here he pꝛomiſeth them that they ſhall be glοꝛified, foꝛ he goeth to the Father, who ſhall deliuer all thinges into his handes, that he may mightely obtaine a kingdom ouer all things that are in heauen and earth. Wheꝛefoꝛe they ought nothing at all to feare. He yet comfoꝛteth them moꝛe and ſayth:

And whatſoeuer ye aske in my name, that will I doe. As if he ſhould ſay: As ſoone as I come to the Father, there is no cauſe why ye ſhould be carefull. Foꝛ thoſe thinges that ye haue neede of and aſke, ye ſhal obtaine, I wil doe this foꝛ you becauſe I obtaine a kingdom. And he peculiarly addeth, in my Name, whereby he excludeth al our merits. Foꝛ By Chꝛiſt we are heard, as alſo in Chꝛiſt we are loued, by whom alſo we are Pꝛieſtes, as Peter ſayth, to offer vp ſpirituall ſacrifices, and acceptable to God. All theſe thinges ſayth Chꝛiſt, I will doe foꝛ this cauſe:

That the Father may be glοꝛified in the Sonne. The Father is then glοꝛified, when glοꝛie is giuen and aſcribed vnto him, not vnto vs. That is when we acknowledge ꝧ we are ſaued not by our owne merits, not by our owne wiſedom and righteouſnes, but doe put our truſt in his mercie. Foꝛ he hath giuen his Sonne foꝛ our ſinnes, and whatſoeuer we purpoſe to aſke, we muſt aſke it by this Sonne, and we ſhal obtaine it. Wheꝛefoꝛe he repeateth theſe woꝛdes, and ſayth.

If ye ſhall aske any thing in my Name I will doe it. Theſe woꝛds tend to this ende, that he might make vs certainly beleeue his woꝛdes, and cleaue vnto him. This theꝛefoꝛe is the ſumme of this concluſion: He biddeth his Diſciples and vs theꝛefoꝛe beleeue,

leeue, for that he goeth to raigne. Before he affirmeth, that he will shew forth a signe and testimonie of his kingdom, & so reigne, that he will declare a notable token of his gouernment, that we may feele and perceiue it, to wit, that he will doe so great workes by vs, as he him selfe hath done, yea and greater also. Also, that he will heare vs when we pray, and whatsoeuer we pray for vnto the Father in his name. By these promises the hart must be confirmed & made couragious against the gates of hell. For Christ reigneth by his word, wherefore it is needefull that we exactly know the vertue of the word: for the kingdom of Christ is the power & vertue of God. These things I thought good to entreat of concerning this Gospell: Let vs call vpon God for the ayde of his grace, that we may be able to vnderstand them, & by them to strengthen our weake faith.

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FINIS.

